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ABSTRACT

The first of six issues of the GED Items newsletter published in 1987 contains articles on one company's approach to literacy in the workplace, General Educational Development (GED) teacher training videotapes, and a process model for improving thinking skills. Articles in issue 2 address military recruiting, synthesis thinking skills, and GED in Canada. Issue 3 presents articles on resources for adult learners with disabilities, adult education at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. (the only university in the world established to provide higher education for deaf people), adult learners with disabilities, and GED communication strategies for marketing. Issue 4 contains articles on first results of the 1988 GED tests, highlights of the annual GED conference, teaching tips for writing, and teaching tips for the revised GED tests. Articles in issue 5/6 concern suggestions for GED mathematics instruction, GED and the community college, marketing strategies, and expansion of the National Issues Forums' Literacy Program. (YLB)

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GED Items

Vol. 4, Nos. 1-6

The Newsletter of the GED Testing Service

American Council on Education

Washington, DC

1987

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AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

VOL. 4, NO. 1 Jan./Feb. 1987 • The Newsletter of the GED Testing Service • Washington, D.C.

Literacy in the Workplace

A Look at one Company's Approach

by Jon Ezekiel

"It's a monumental task coordinating all the programs that are going on [at GM] and finding out which is the best. At the same time it's kind of fool-hardy to have everybody reinventing the wheel all over the country."

The speaker, responsible in part for coordinating a workplace literacy program of international dimension, is Donald J. Davis, the United Auto Worker's Executive Co-Director of the UAW/GM Human Resources Center in Michigan.

As such, he administers GM's joint basic-education and workplace literacy programs, which can affect 425,000 hourly employees in the US and Canada. At GM, current and displaced workers now receive individualized basic skills training (including some GED instruction) under the '82 and '84 collective bargaining agreements with the UAW.

For Davis, employee education means basic literacy skills—reading, writing, and cyphering. It also means "workplace literacy," or applying those skills in identifying and evaluating information relevant to the job.

Today, basic education and workplace literacy are standard features at GM.

No less concerned than Davis with employee education is his counterpart, Kenneth J. McCormick, who is GM's Executive Co-Director of the Human Resources Center.

Mr. McCormick admits that GM's concern with the educational level of its hourly workers is recent, however.

Historically, manufacturing skills and academic skills were seen by GM as unrelated. This may explain why today, at least by *The Wall Street Journal*'s accounting, roughly 15 percent of GM's hourly workers—up to 30 percent at some plants—cannot read or write. "That is why," says McCormick, "there isn't a plant in General Motors where there is not a major training explosion."

In addition to organizing remedial and preparatory instruction for its enormous work force, GM is responsible to 29,000 workers at 11 plants that are scheduled to close over the next three years. Many of these employees will be trained by GM, as guaranteed by their UAW contract, for other jobs within the company or for work outside the auto industry.

The prospects for these displaced workers, and for thousands of current GM employees, may depend on educational programs like the GED. Both UAW/GM Co-Directors praise the GED certificate's effect upon individual employees, and acknowledge the significant benefits for GM.

Nonetheless, GED programs are not emphasized as official policy at GM, but elected on a plant-by-plant basis. Says Davis, "I don't think we promote it as much as we probably should."

Meanwhile, GM is stiffening its hiring criteria. "To the extent that tests can be validated and conform with various laws in the civil rights area," says McCormick, "we are exploring ways to ensure that we have people with better educations than we had ten years ago."

The implications of this statement are direct. At General Motors, as in every segment of the workforce, American adults without basic skills face a bleak vocational future.

Bleak, that is, unless a monumental effort by adult educators and the business community enables these workers to acquire a new, more powerful set of tools. ■

Success at 74!

See story on p. 2.

Schedule for the Revised GED Tests

Many of you have inquired about the schedule for introducing the revised GED Tests in your state or province in 1988. The changeover will *not* take place everywhere on January 1. Rather, we have scheduled introduction of the revised tests at various times throughout 1988. (The reason for the staggered schedule is, quite simply, that we are physically unable to ship materials to all 3,000 GED testing centers at one time.)

(continued on page 2)

Inside *Items*

GED Videos
State Test Schedules
Ask the Experts
and more

GED Success Story

City Hall Worker Earns Diploma and Reveals His Fib

Now it can be told that a shadow alumnus of Frankford High School has emerged from the shadow. At age 74, Joseph Morrone has acquired his GED.

Joe Morrone is the man who, among other things, keeps the sound systems functioning daily in City Hall and for special events in the Mayor's Reception Room. For years he kept a personal secret.

He had dropped out of school when he was in the eighth grade, but whenever he was asked about his background, he would say, "I went to Frankford High"—and quickly change the subject.

Morrone, who was one of 11 children, had to go to work to help support his family.

"Not having a high school education embarrassed me," Morrone said yesterday during an interview in the office of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy in Philadelphia, in City Hall Annex. "I picked Frankford for an imaginary alma mater because I always wished I could have gone there."

Three weeks ago, Joe Morrone got over being embarrassed. He received a GED (General Equivalency Diploma), signifying that he had passed a national high school-level examination.

"It's a great feeling, passing a test like that," Morrone said. "It was pretty rugged. Funny thing—there were five sections, and I saved my favorite subject, science, until last. And that was the section where I almost fell on my face."

The late-in-life education of Joe Morrone began last June in the Mayor's Reception Room on the second floor of City Hall. Morrone, a technical specialist in the communications division of the Department of Public Property, had set up his sound system for use at a news conference held by Marciene S. Mattleman, executive director of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy.

Mattleman announced that beginning early July and continuing each weekday until late August, a televised GED preparation program, with the catchy title *Ready, GED Set, Learn*, would be aired on Channel 17.

There would be 34 lessons in reading comprehension, grammar, mathematics, science and social studies, Mattleman said. Then she went on to tell of how supplemental study materials would be available at neighborhood libraries, how some students doubtless would need to get into regular GED classes at sites throughout the city, how other students might desire to study on their own but would find volunteer teachers and tutors available through the city-wide GED program.

And, of course, she spoke of how, when each student was ready, he or she could go to a testing center and take the examination that could bring a piece of paper issued by the School District of Philadelphia, certifying that the student possessed the equivalent of a high school education.

At age 74, Joseph Morrone has acquired his GED.

"Usually," Joe Morrone said, "I don't pay close attention to what speakers are saying, because I'm too busy making sure the sound is all right. But this time, when this lady spoke, I listened. And I said to myself, '*Do* it.'"

"And he *did* it," Mattleman said yesterday.

Morrone's story points up a facet of the work of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy that often is overlooked. The commission usually is thought of in terms of working to help the functionally illiterate, which, indeed, is a prime function. No less important, however, is its work with people who, for one reason or another, dropped out of school years ago and now need to make up lost ground.

"In today's world," Mattleman said, "a high school diploma—at least—is essential. As the saying goes, you need that piece of paper."

Morrone, who lives in Northeast with his wife, Florence, was a general foreman at RCA's Camden plant for 35 years prior to his retirement in 1975. He stayed retired for about six months.

"That kind of living wasn't for me," he said. "So I went to work for the city."

And just two weeks ago, the city honored him by declaring him "Employee of the Month."

"That and my GED at practically the same time," he said. "It's been a great month." —

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Schedule *(continued from page 1)*

The following schedule is *tentative* and there may be a few changes made to accommodate the needs of each jurisdiction. Check for any changes with the GED Testing Service or your GED Administrator or Examiner as the year progresses.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR INTRODUCING THE REVISED GED TESTS DURING 1988

Date	Tests introduced in states, provinces, territories
January 1	Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Wisconsin, American Samoa, Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands
February 1	Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
March 1	Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Virginia
April 1	Georgia, Michigan
May 1	Colorado, Indiana, Missouri, Texas
June 1	Louisiana, North Carolina, Puerto Rico
July 1	California, Illinois, Guam
August 1	Kentucky, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Wyoming, Virgin Islands
September 1	Nevada, New York, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Canadian provinces and territories
October 1	Oregon, Veterans Administration centers, U.S. Military centers (overseas and in most states), Federal prisons, other overseas
November 1	Alaska, Arizona, Massachusetts, Panama
November 15	Washington
December 1	Kansas, Ohio, West Virginia

A New Look At GED Outreach

On October 13, 1986, Victoria Falco joined the staff of the Center for Adult Learners as Director of Outreach and Marketing Activities. Ms. Falco has over 15 years experience in marketing for higher education, including positions with the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine and Carnegie-Mellon University. The following is from a recent interview with Ms. Falco.

ED—What is your definition of marketing?

VF—Marketing, to me, means the development and execution of effective communication strategies. And in order to communicate effectively, we must do everything we can to understand both the products and services that we offer, as well as the nature and needs of those with whom we are attempting to communicate.

ED—Are you saying that marketing isn't just putting out information, but is also receiving information in return?

VF—That's right. In its simplest form, marketing is a series of exchange relationships, a dialogue, concerning the costs and benefits of a particular product or service.

ED—Why do educators tend to react negatively to the idea of marketing?

VF—Many educators think of marketing as undignified, and perhaps even unethical, because of the many abuses of marketing principles that we see every day. In fact, if you think of marketing in terms of my definition, it is both ethical and dignified. If we understand the needs and expectations of those with whom we are communicating, we can tailor our message in a manner that will ensure that they are informed, but not misled. A well-planned marketing program can help the consumer to make the best possible decision. ➡

(In our next issue, Vicki Falco will begin a regular column on Outreach and Marketing Activities.)

HAPPY NEW YEAR

GED Students Discuss National Issues

In Tucson, a GED student who never before spoke in class began offering opinions. In suburban Minneapolis, classes became livelier when students of different skill levels took part in group discussions. In an Indiana prison, GED students presented their informed opinions on a complex national issue to a state legislator.

The GED programs at each of the above locations were enhanced by a new component, the National Issues Forum Literacy Project. Cosponsored by the National Issues Forum (NIF), Laubach Literacy Action, the Kettering Foundation, and B. Dalton Booksellers, the NIF Literacy Project offers to adult education and GED classes a unique program of issues discussion.

National Issues Forum Literacy Project participants are part of a nationwide program which took place this year in 300 communities. Begun in 1981, the NIF seeks to improve the quality of public issues discussion by providing balanced, nonpartisan booklets on critical issues, plus opportunities for citizens to discuss their concerns with each other. National Issues Forum also works to improve communication between citizens and policymakers by publishing the results of those discussions, and by sponsoring two annual conferences.

Adults in GED classes joined the nationwide issues discussion last year, when the NIF broadened its base to include those often left out of the political mainstream. Through a joint effort with Laubach Literacy Action, NIF published a Special Audience issue book on each topic, edited to a lower reading level. Six sites across the country took part in the pilot program, including GED classes in Arizona, Minnesota, and New York. NIF Literacy Project participants included refugees, immigrants, native Americans, senior citizens, and the rural and urban poor. This year, more than 30 sites have joined the program.

Mary Hurley, lead teacher in the Westonka Adult Education Project in Mound, Minn., joined the NIF Literacy Project because of her interest in a holistic approach to adult education.

"This program is just what we were looking for," Hurley said. "We wanted a vehicle that would provide social and communication skills as well as those for reading."

To improve reading skills, the Minnesota GED students studied the NIF Special Audience books for vocabulary, graphs, and paragraph development. When they discussed issues in a group, the students were encouraged to both express themselves and to listen to others.

"This program is just what we were looking for . . ."

The social skills gained from the NIF Literacy Project were especially important for students at the Westville Correctional Center in Westville, Ind., which used the program this year in its literacy, GED, and college-level classes.

"We need programs here that go beyond basic vocational and educational skills," said Shannon Reffet, director of the prison's educational program. "When inmates leave, their big problem isn't getting a job—it's keeping it. Their personality problems trip them up, not lack of skills."

After studying the farm crisis in small groups, the Westville participants held a large forum which was videotaped for broadcast on a local cable station. At the forum, eleven inmates reported the study group results to a state legislator.

The opportunity to report their opinions to policymakers—whether face-to-face or with the NIF questionnaires—helps NIF Literacy Project participants to feel a part of the American mainstream. And prisoners are not the only ones whose self-esteem improves when they feel a sense of connection with society.

"Students had a tremendous response to being asked their opinion," reported Tucson teacher Gail Britanik, whose GED class included Hispanics and Anglos as well as native Americans. "They said, 'you mean, someone cares what I think?' They eagerly filled out the questionnaires."

The NIF Literacy Project programs at Westville, Tucson, and Mound all varied in format and structure, depending on the needs of the specific GED class.

For more information about the NIF Literacy Project, contact Robert Lehman, National Issues Forum, 5335 Far Hills Avenue, Dayton, OH (513) 434-7300, or William Raleigh, Laubach Literacy International, 1320 Jamesville Avenue, Box 131, Syracuse, NY (315) 422-9121. ➡

Minority Students in Higher Education

If you have been thinking that the far-reaching civil rights progress during the past two decades has translated into proportional representation for black students in the nation's colleges, think again! The Fifth Annual Status Report on Minorities in Higher Education, issued in October by the American Council on Education's Office of Minority Concerns, concludes that:

"Without question, blacks are losing ground at most levels in higher education. Although Hispanics are increasing their enrollments and faculty participation due to their dramatic increase in the population, proportionately they remain under-represented and concentrated at two-year institutions. The problems of increasing access and retention of minority students remains unsolved and unaddressed in most states."

> "Without question, blacks are losing ground at most levels in higher education."

As educators with large numbers of black and Hispanic students, GED teachers and examiners have an opportunity to encourage their students to think about attending college. Are you doing what you can to see that your students consider the long-term benefits of attending college? Are you preparing them with the needed skills and knowledge for them to gain admission and succeed?

Copies of the Report are available for $6 pre-paid from: ACE Office of Minority Concerns, One Dupont Circle, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. ←

Spanish Tests to Change, Too

In case we hadn't made it clear, the GED Spanish-language tests will also be changing in 1988. For the most part, the changes paralled those for the English-language battery; the revised Spanish tests will include a writing sample. Spanish-language versions of the Official GED Practice Tests will be available late in 1987. It has not yet been determined whether revised French-language tests will be available for 1988.

The Savvy Reader

Three days each week, "The Savvy Reader" column runs in the Philadelphia Daily News. Unlike other newspaper columns, this one is designed for the beginning reader. It is a *real* news column, just different. Say the staff writers: "It is a column for students of reading and for those who want to read better. The Savvy Reader is written in a style that is easy to read. It is clear and direct."

The column defines difficult words and explains background that is taken for granted in regular news stories. Most of the Savvy Reader columns are based on stories or feature articles that appear elsewhere in the same newspaper edition; a few have even taught readers how to understand other parts of the paper—like baseball box scores.

It's not easy to be sure the column is accurate and helpful, but three dedicated Daily News staffers (and some adult education consultants) have held to this standard since the column first appeared on January 20, 1986. To be sure material is understood, three comprehensive questions (with answers) conclude each column. Most columns also feature a "talking point"—a provocative question to ponder and discuss.

A special edition containing tips for teachers and a collection of some of the columns is available by asking for The Savvy Reader from: Philadelphia Newspapers, Inc., 400 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19101. You may want to try something like this in your own hometown newspaper. ←

New Jersey Raises GED Score Requirements

New Jersey recently began requiring GED examinees to earn a standard score of at least 44 on the Reading Skills Test, and a score of at least 43 on the Mathematics Test, in order to earn the state's high school diploma. (A score of at least 40 is required on the other three tests, and the average must still be 45 or higher.) The changes were made on the basis of a study comparing the state's minimum GED passing scores with those for the state's high school graduation test. The higher standards are effective October 1, 1986, and apply to all persons who are seeking a credential from New Jersey. Readers needing further information should contact Sandy Havran, New Jersey GED Administrator, at (609)588-3151. ←

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Excerpt from "The Savvy Reader"

January 19, 1987 is the second time that we celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as a national holiday.

The law which makes the day a holiday said that Dr. King will be honored on a Monday near his birthday. That is why the official celebration this year is four days after the day of his birth.

Dr. King was born Jan. 15, 1929, in Atlanta. He was a Baptist minister who helped black people in the struggle to get all of their rights as American citizens. He was killed in 1968.

Each year, people in this country will gather for Dr. King's birthday to remember his legacy to us.

A legacy is what a person leaves behind to another person. A legacy is usually money or land or possessions. Dr. King's legacy was rare. It was an idea, and he left it to all Americans.

Dr. King said he had a dream that blacks, whites, and other races could live together in freedom and peace and respect. He said Americans could achieve this dream by non-violence.

In the 1950s, laws in the South did not allow black people to do the same things white people did. This is called discrimination.

Dr. King was a young preacher who broke the laws to show they were wrong. He and his supporters were arrested and beaten. He never fought back. He believed in peaceful change. He said violence was wrong, just like the laws.

Dr. King was shot to death April 4, 1968, by a man who hated him and the way he had helped black people.

Since then, people who loved and admired Dr. King have wanted to honor him by making his birthday a holiday.

The government in Washington, D.C. can create a holiday by passing a law. In 1983, Congress voted for a bill to create the King holiday. President Reagan signed the bill, and it became a law.

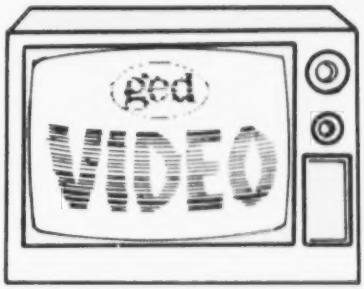
The law said that beginning in 1986, the third Monday in January will be celebrated as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. That law makes sure the holiday will always be part of a three-day weekend.

Adapted with permission from *THE PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS*

Three Teacher Training Videotapes from GEDTS

During the past year, GEDTS staff have conducted workshops for GED teachers in more than 20 states. Most sessions have focused on information about the changes to be made in the GED Tests in 1988 and have included advice for teachers on how to effectively help their students acquire those skills that the test demands. As you might guess, the major questions right now concern writing and thinking skills. Many of you will have an opportunity to interact with GEDTS staff at workshops during 1987, too. But, since we can't get everywhere and can't see everyone personally, we have done the next best thing.

Working with the Kentucky Educational Television staff and colleagues from Kentucky and Illinois, we have prepared two videotapes for use in teacher workshops and teacher orientation programs. Rich Swartz, formerly our Senior Test Editor, discusses *Writing* on one tape. He includes a discussion of the holistic scoring procedure that we will be using to evaluate the students' essays and offers a number of tips for teaching writing. Wayne Patience, GEDTS Associate Director, illustrates the kinds of high-level reasoning skills that the revised tests emphasize on the *Thinking Skills* tape. He uses sample GED Test questions to illustrate these skills and models a process-oriented approach to their teaching.



We have provided each GED Administrator and State Director of Adult Education with a set of the two tapes; many of you will be seeing these at statewide and/or regional meetings in 1987. If you wish to obtain a set for local use, they are available for $274.00 from: KET Enterprise, Suite 213, 2230 Richmond Road, Lexington, KY 40502.

For teachers (and students, too) who need a review of what the 1988 GED Tests will be like, we have also worked with the staff at Contemporary Books to prepare a tape that contains the kind of information we distributed last year in written form in *The 1988 Tests of General Educational Development: A Preview*. We are planning to publish an expanded *Official GED Teachers Guide* later this year, but the tape provides a quick overview of the revised tests. Test information is presented from the student's point of view. A printed viewer's guide is designed for use with the tape.

GED Administrators and State Directors of Adult Education will also receive copies of *The New GED Tests: An Overview for 1988–1998*. Single copies are available for $225.00. Readers wishing to obtain a copy for their own use should contact Wendy Harris, Contemporary Books, Inc., 180 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601.

All three tapes are designed to be useful and appropriate long after 1988. The information contained is expected to be relevant for all GED Tests used during the next decade, so they won't quickly become dated. We hope that you will find them to be a valuable addition to the written material that we have prepared for your use. ☁

GED PSA Update

Would you believe 27,191 plays on 254 stations and networks in 174 cities? That's right! Since their release on August 11, 1986, the GED public service announcement radio spots have received nearly 300 hours of actual and committed air time at an estimated value of $1,866,663!

Earlier reports from the field in cities where the spots are airing with a local telephone number trailer indicated a marked increase in the number of calls for information, class schedules, and/or testing time.

Among the stations that have made major commitments of air time to these announcements, (based on cards returned by the stations before October 28,) are:

State	City	Station
AR	Batesville	KBTA/KZLE
CA	Eureka	KINS
CO	Walsenburg	KFLJ
CT	Bloomfield	WJMJ
IN	South Bend	WETL
KS	Scott City	KFLA/KEZU
KY	Salversville	WRLV
MA	Wellesley	WZLY
MI	Bay City	WBCM
MI	Harrison	WKKM
OK	Duncan	KRHD
PA	Reading	WRAW/WRFY
PA	Wilkes-Barre	WKRZ

News and Notes:

Individual Attention to Students' Special Needs Leads to Success in Adult Basic Education/GED Program

At John Wood Community College in Quincy, Ill., a program designed to give adults a second chance at completing their high school education is resulting in a higher level of educational achievement for district residents. The personalized approach used to provide a comprehensive education assures students of making not only academic gains but also strides in the areas of personal and vocational development leading to a brighter future for themselves and their children. With predictions from the National Center for Educational Statistics that 11 million of the 40 million youngsters enrolled in public schools will not complete high school, the college is convinced that viable alternatives must be made available to those who discover as adults that high school completion is indeed a necessity.

Considering the vast differences in abilities and needs of adult education students, John Wood's program uses an individualized approach which takes full advantage of the adults' interest in learning. With this approach, students learn at the time, location, rate, and methodology best suited to them. After thorough skill testing, cooperative efforts on goal-setting enable students to improve academic skills as well as gain self-confidence. Students progress through the lessons most appropriate for them by a combination of teacher guidance, tutorial assistance, independent practice with self-instructional materials, small-group instruction and peer assistance on an impromptu basis. Sharing the leadership role with their instructors, students evaluate their progress and set new goals as necessary. With improved academic and self-directional skills, the students become more aware of their potential and better able to make use of it through their own initiative. It is that knowledge, coupled with the skill and confidence to act upon it, that the staff considers the best possible results of formal education.

A Process Model for Improving Thinking Skills

In our series on thinking skills (see *GED Items*, Vol. 3, Nos. 2 through 6), we have focused on defining and illustrating the skills needed to answer GED Test items at the various cognitive skill levels. So far, we have discussed all the skill levels required to answer the multiple choice items on both the current and revised GED Tests. In this article, we outline a process that teachers can use to help students improve thinking skills.

As with the mastery of any skill, one point should be clear: **to learn and improve thinking skills, students must engage in activities which require the use of these skills.** A number of teaching methods or models have been proposed to help students gain experience and thereby improve their thinking skills. The process model described here is an adaptation of one strategy called the "Guided Design." (This model is described in "Strategies for Problem Solving" by Jerry K. Stonewater in *New Directions for Teaching and Learning: Fostering Critical Thinking*, Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers, Number 3, 1980.)

The Process Model

The goal of this process is to *get students involved* in solving problems and exercises which require higher order thinking skills representative of the skills they will need to answer GED Test questions. Depending on the size of the class and/or the teacher's preference, students work individually, in small groups (2 to 3), as a class, or a combination of these arrangements. The critical point is that *every* student must get actively involved.

The focus of the students' work and that of interactions among students and with the teacher are exercises constructed to require higher order thinking skills in relation to subject area knowledge. The process as guided by the teacher focuses on steps inherent in effective problem solving (e.g., identifying and clarifying the nature of the problem, identifying information needed, generating possible strategies and solutions, evaluating strategies and solutions, solving the problem, evaluating and checking the preferred solution). Each of the steps often qualifies as a small scale problem in and of itself.

Among the critical roles of the teacher is the task of identifying or constructing exercises which require both the various levels of thinking skills and appropriate subject area knowledge.

Roles of the Teacher

The roles of the teacher in this process can be described as: process planner, facilitator and consultant, and quality controller.

As *process planner*, the teacher is responsible for creating and assigning the exercises which serve as the focus for a learning activity. In addition to integrating thinking skills with appropriate content, good exercises must:

- be realistic problems students can relate to. Listen for common practical problems students encounter and structure your exercises around these problems.
- ask for student supplied answers or solutions. Multiple choice questions, while they provide for rapid scoring in a testing situation, simply do not work well for activities designed to foster thinking skills.

By studying the examples and definitions we've given in this series, as well as in other publications (e.g., *The 1988 Tests of General Educational Development: A Preview*, GED Testing Service), you should be able to create your own exercises or find appropriate ones in commercial materials. Creating your own exercises may not be as tedious and time-consuming as you might imagine. Magazines and newspapers are a rich source of stimulus material. Also, one good stimulus can often serve for multiple skill levels as well as content areas. We recommend that you create your own exercises because: 1) the best exercises are those which tap the interests and abilities of your students, and you know best what those interests and abilities are; and 2) by creating your own exercises, you enhance your ability to serve as facilitator and consultant.

As *facilitator*, the teacher must create a setting in which students will be comfortable sharing ideas. Starting students out on problems they can solve and giving students ample reinforcement for their successes helps to put students at ease. However, teachers must also help students develop positive and realistic attitudes about the difficult nature of higher order problem solving. Poor problem solvers often give up too quickly and need continual encouragement.

As *facilitator*, the teacher should ask leading questions which 1) help clarify the problem and 2) suggest possible strategies for solving the problem. (This process is beginning to sound a lot like the old Socratic method, isn't it?) When students are working individually or in small groups, the teacher should circulate and observe the process. When students need knowledge in a subject area, the teacher serves as *consultant* by providing or pointing the way to the relevant information. (Note that this is an example of how the process integrates the teaching of content and thinking skills.) If in observing the process it becomes clear that a particular piece of information (content) is needed or a particularly promising strategy emerges, the teacher may provide more information or ask a student or group to share the strategy with the class.

Circulating and observing are also required in the role of *quality controller*. In this role, the teacher redirects students who may be stuck or pursuing an unproductive or unrealistic approach. The teacher must also help students identify criteria for evaluating their strategies and solutions.

In summary, the process outlined here is one which requires students to become *active learners*. While the teacher is traditionally responsible for structuring the learning environment, it is the learner who must participate in order to progress.

(In future issues, we will be publishing teaching tips in the GED content areas. These tips will provide additional suggestions on how to use the process described above.)

GED *Items* is published bimonthly by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education. This newsletter is not copyrighted and readers are invited to copy any part of the newsletter that has not been previously copyrighted. Credit should be given in accordance with accepted publishing standards. *Editor*: Susan Robinson. *Associate Editors*: Richard Metcalf and Douglas Whitney. *Contributing Editors*: Andrew Malizio and Wayne Patience. *Contributors*: Jon Ezekiel, Patricia Jones, Linda Russell, and Rich Swartz. *Production and Circulation Manager*: Suzette Stone.

Administration and Scoring of the 1988 Writing Skills Test

Two frequently asked questions about the essay part of the 1988 GED Writing Skills Tests are: 1) "How long will students have to write their essay?" and 2) "How much will the essay count?"

The Writing Skills Test will consist of two parts: Part I is the 55 item multiple choice portion which has a time limit of 75 minutes. Part II is the essay portion on which examinees will have 45 minutes to work. However, these two parts of the Writing Skills Test will be administered *together* with a two hour total time limit. Examinees who finish the multiple choice part in less than 75 minutes may go on to the essay. Examiners will announce when 45 minutes remain and that examinees should begin work on Part II (the essay) if they have not done so already. If examinees complete their essay before the two hour time limit, they may return to the multiple choice portion. Our data suggest that the vast majority of examinees will find the two hour time limit adequate. Most examinees have ample time to organize their thoughts about the essay topic and review what they have written.

The Writing Skills composite standard score (on the usual 20 to 80 scale) will be based on weights of between 60 and 65 percent for the multiple choice part and 35 to 40 percent for the essay. (Relative weights will vary slightly from topic to topic due to slight differences in essay topic score distributions.) These weights are in keeping with the recommendations of the Test Specifications and GED Advisory Committees. These weights give the largest weight to the essay possible without diminishing the overall reliability of the Writing Skills Test score below acceptable levels. It is important to note that the essay raw score will *not* be reported separately because it is not sufficiently reliable to warrant attempts at interpretation. Additional information on the weighting of the essay and formation of the Writing Skills composite standard score will be included in future GED Testing Service publications. The Teacher's Manual for the Official GED Practice Tests (available by July of 1987) will contain tables which will enable teachers to determine the predicted Writing Skills composite standard score from the essay and multiple choice raw scores. Weighting of these two scores will be taken care of by reading the table appropriately.

Ask the Experts . . . That's You!

In response to our question about no-shows, Debbie Crownover, Secretary/Examiner of Pulaski County Board of Education in Little Rock, Arkansas writes:

"We also have experienced a large number of no-shows at this testing center, probably because in Arkansas testers are not charged to take the examination.

One thing we have tried is to make testers come in to the office to complete the application. This does present a hardship on those who work full-time, don't have adequate transportation, or have several small children, but it does bring about results in decreasing no-shows. It seems if testers take the initiative to come by once, they will come back again to complete the test.

Another way we have tried to reduce no-shows is less of a hardship on those mentioned above. If testers call at least one day in advance of their scheduled test date to reschedule or cancel, we do not penalize them in any way, but we do put a letter "C" on their application.

(We keep current applications for a period of three months.) If they do not call to reschedule or cancel, we make them wait at least one week for each time they were a no-show. For example, if a person has three different scheduled dates on his or her application and did not show up for them, and there is not a letter "C" on the application, we will not test that person for a period of three weeks.

This is not as complicated as it sounds and does bring about a sizable reduction in no-shows in this office.

We are in the business of helping the public and do not want to put any undue hardship on them, but we feel if GED graduates are going out into the business world or into higher education, they need to learn responsibility somewhere." (*More reader response next month on no-shows.*)

Has anyone out there developed materials or given special thought to transitioning ESL students to GED? Don Martin, principal of Visalia (Calif.) Adult School would like to hear from anyone who has dealt with the unique challenges faced by ESL students who are ready for GED preparation but whose English-language skills could still use some help. Write us here at GEDTS and we will publish your suggestions.

Spring '87 Item Tryout Schedule

GEDTS will conduct the Spring 1987 item tryout in GED testing centers in Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and all Canadian Provinces. The tryout will be conducted March 2, 1987 through April 30, 1987 and approximately 600 testing centers will be participating. All examinees tested during the study period are expected to participate in the project and take one tryout test. An additional 45 minutes will be required from the examinee for completing the tryout items and essay. The tryout will allow the best of the newly-developed items to be selected for final forms of the 1988 GED Tests.

Approximately 12,000 examinees participated in the Fall 1986 tryout at 325 testing centers in Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Canada.

GED Administrators and Chief Examiners with questions should contact Patricia H. Jones at the GED Testing Service, American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036-1163.

Take Me Out to . . . Adult Literacy Night

Another novel publicity idea from the lively folks at the Philadelphia Mayor's Commission on Illiteracy:

On September 30, the Phillies' National League baseball game that evening was designated Adult Literacy Night. Marciene Mattleman, executive director of the commission threw out the ceremonial first ball, and the giant scoreboard ran literacy messages all night long.

It doesn't have to be a major league game, of course—and the sport need not be baseball. What's your game?

The Last Word

Getting Testy

by Richard Swartz

I learned something about tests recently. Not about writing them. About taking them.

One of the joys of moving to another state is that you get to take your driver's test again. So I showed up for my part of the fun, and it went something like this.

A lady at a counter (I think it's the fifth one so far, but who's counting?) whips out a legal-sized form with about sixty or so questions on it. She slashes through about half of the questions with a red pen and shoves the paper at me.

She says, "Answeralltheotherquestionsdon'tanswertheonesIcrossedoutbesuretoanswerallttheonesaboutthesignsusetheredpenonthedesk. Next!"

I say, "Huh?"

The wilting look she gives me is the clearest piece of communication so far. Then she points helpfully at the row of desk chairs and says "Next" again.

The desk chairs have been strategically placed in the darkest corner of the room and aligned to remind us of school. A pen is attached by chain to each chair. Not a pencil, a pen. A *red* pen.

Now a funny thing happens. Sitting in a school chair for the first time in years, unforgiving red pen in hand and answer sheet staring up, I start getting nervous. Me, veteran test-taker and test-maker, who can recite fifteen test-taking tips at the drop of an answer sheet, struck with test anxiety! After all, this is for my driver's license. This thing *counts*! I've got a car parked outside, and I'd like to drive the darn thing home. Twenty years of practical experience at driving leaves me in a flash.

I silently recite tip number ten (it has something to do with r-biserials) and forge ahead. The first question reads:

When stopping at an intersection, you should

(1) come to a complete stop before entering the crosswalk
(2) stop in the middle of the crosswalk
(3) blow your horn to announce you are stopping
(4) the car should not travel at more than fifteen miles per hour
(5) ignore the signal

Alarms sound a full red alert in my head. This item needs editing! This item stinks! It's not testing knowledge of the rules at all; it's testing common sense. It's at the cognitive level of dumb.

I glance ahead: some of the items have five alternatives, some have four. And some have three and some have two. Depends on the mood of the item writer, I guess.

My anxiety melts away, replaced instead by the anger of a craftsman inspecting a piece of masonite furniture. They call this a test? I plough through the questions, resisting the training and experience that shout at me to FIX THESE ITEMS!

As I'm handing in my form, I imagine telling the lady how technically unsound the test is.

"What's the reliability of this test?" I might start off.

"Huh," she'd say.

"The reliability. You know, what's the KR-20 coefficient?"

"What're you, some kinda wise guy?"

"Come to think of it, the thing really lacks face validity."

"Face *what*?"

"Face validity. You're supposed to be measuring the ability to operate a motor vehicle, but you're really measuring—"

At this point she gestures to the security guard, who approaches cautiously.

"—common sense. The ability to eliminate moronic distractors."

"Whaddya mean distractors?"

"The options. I mean, the distribution's gotta be skewed all over the place."

"You watch your language," she says.

"Okay, buster," the guard takes over, "that's enough."

"Wait, she didn't grade my test yet."

She crumples the test form up and tosses it in a wastebasket. "Nobody talks to me like that," she declares.

Now a crowd is forming, and the guard takes me by the arm. "Let's go." We head for the door.

"It lacks internal consistency!" I yell for all in the room to hear.

"Get him outa here," somebody shouts.

Enraged by this rough treatment, I invent the worst possible epithet. The guard opens the door and begins shoving me through it. I fend him off just long enough to shout "You oughta add an essay!"

But I'm a realist. So I stood there playing out the scene in my imagination as the lady graded my test.

"Yoopassed. Steptocounternumbersixthey'llgiveyouyourlicense."

They did. And I drove home. More wary than ever of all the other graduates out there. ☙

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January/February, 1987

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American Council on Education
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Carol Sasaki confers with a group of interested friends.

Support for "Returning" Women

GED Graduate Starts National Network

Carol Sasaki ran away from home and school when she was in seventh grade. Years later, she was a welfare mother without hope for the future. Finally, after repeatedly failing the Tests, Carol passed her GED. Now this graduate is a PhD candidate, who aims to help others achieve self-sufficiency through education.

To show just how self-sufficient Carol herself has become, in June 1986, she received a Volunteer Action Award from President Reagan. Soon after, Carol was a guest on the Phil Donahue show and has since been featured in *People* magazine and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The public recognition now afforded Carol Sasaki all centers on a project she organized to help people get off welfare and go to college. Carol calls it Project HOME (Helping Ourselves Means Education). When a friend told Carol she would have to get an education or condemn herself to a life of dependency, she first decided to get a GED. It was a long struggle, but eventually she had that first important credential. College was next.

Carol says that people on welfare feel so removed from "successful" society that most won't even consider going to college. When it comes to education, they feel stupid, overlooked, and discriminated against. Project HOME tries to remedy this self-perception by helping people to understand and cope with both the welfare and the academic bureaucracies. The Project publishes a newsletter called the *HOME Communication Channel*. Besides publishing success stories of HOME's participants, the Channel focuses on encouragement and how-to's. A recent issue, for example, urged people to make a New Year's resolution to get their GED. HOME also offers a checklist for forming similar support groups, survival strategies for returning women who need financial aid, and an invitation to participants to send their problems and questions to HOME. For further information, write H.O.M.E., P.O. Box 621, Pullman, WA 99163. The newsletter is free.

Military Recruiting and the Adult Student

Readers of GED *Items* will recall that we have published a number of articles concerning the military recruiting policies as they relate to GED graduates. Recently, we were informed that the military services are planning to change their enlistment priorities. Unfortunately, the changes fail to address the inequities and, in fact, make the situation worse! The services will shortly begin to give a lower enlistment priority to all non-traditional education graduates—not just GED graduates, as they have in the past.

For many years, the services have given top priority to recruiting men and women who have just graduated from a traditional, secondary education day school program. Because studies of attrition (i.e., leaving military service) show that GED graduates and non-graduates are less likely to complete their first enlistment, these recruits receive a lower priority than traditional graduates. Typically, about 60% of the adult graduates complete their first term of service; about 80% of the traditional graduates do so.

As a practical matter, this policy has meant that enlistment has been denied to GED graduates and non-graduates when the local recruiting quota can be

(continued on p. 4)

Inside *Items*

Advice for Military Recruits
GED In Canada
Synthesis Thinking Skills
and more

Who Will Have to Retest?

The GEDTS staff has received a number of inquiries concerning the retest implications of the switch to the revised Writing Skills Test (including essay) in 1988. The question most often asked is:

"Will students who have earned satisfactory scores on the current Writing Skills Test have to retake the test when the version with essay is introduced?"

The answer is NO. When the switch to the revised GED Tests occurs, standard scores from prior test administrations will continue to be valid for earning the credential. That is, if a student earns a passing score or better (depending on the requirements of each state or province) on one of the current GED Writing Skills Tests

"Will students who have earned satisfactory scores on the current Writing Skills Test have to retake the test when the version with essay is introduced?"

before the revised tests are introduced in that jurisdiction, that score can be used to earn a credential, the student will not have to retest if satisfactory scores have been earned on an earlier version of the Writing Skills Test.

Another frequently asked question is:

"If a student first takes a form of the Writing Skills Test without the essay, then wishes to retest after the revised tests are introduced, can he/she take an 'old form' without an essay?"

The answer to this one is also NO. No matter when the student began testing, all Writing Skills Tests administered in a state or province after the conversion date (see schedule in the January issue of this newsletter) will use a version that includes the essay.

"If a student first takes a form of the Writing Skills Test without the essay, then wishes to retest after the revised tests are introduced, can he/she take an 'old form' without an essay?"

Behind both questions, we sense, is an *unfounded* fear that the revised Writing Skills Tests will prove to be unusually difficult for the GED examinees. Our tryout results do not indicate that the introduction of the revised Writing Skills Tests will be accompanied by a large drop in the passing rate. Not, that is, unless students acquire an unreasoned fear of the writing exercise. Since their teachers are most likely to "transmit" that fear, we strongly urge teachers to get accurate information about changes in the tests well ahead of their changeover date and to begin to identify the strengths and weaknesses in their students' writing. Copies of the *Preview* book contain a sample topic that teachers may give to their current students; grading standards are also illustrated in the book. Just ask for *The 1988 Tests of General Educational Development: A Preview*. The book is available at no charge from GEDTS, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036. Materials now are also being developed by the adult education publishers in anticipation of the need to teach writing. ■

Canadianization? Eh?

Many readers do not know that the GED program is alive and well throughout eight provinces and two territories in Canada. If you don't know much about the Canadian program, it may be because the development has proceeded without public fanfare. At least that's the conclusion of Allan Quigley.

Quigley, former GED Administrator in Saskatchewan and current chair of the GED Advisory Committee, is the author of a new publication entitled "The Canadianization of the GED." His paper chronicles the evolution of the Canadian program and notes six significant ways in which the program differs from the U.S. program. With characteristic humor and understatement, Allan has outlined the 18-year history of the program he calls the "unsung hero of Canadian adult education" in a readable way too rarely found in educational histories.

Copies of "Canadianization" have been distributed to all GED Administrators and Canadian Examiners. Others interested in obtaining a copy of GEDTS Occasional Paper No. 1 should write: GED Testing Service (publications), One Dupont Circle, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. The price is $5.00 (US) prepaid. ■

News and Notes

In Denver, Colorado, Emily Griffith Opportunity School, now in its 71st year as the adult vocational and academic arm of the Denver Public Schools, also provides GED testing services. Mr. John J. Astuno, Administrator, notes that the testing services have been available since June 1962.

Dr. Dorothy E. Lagger, instructor of the ABE/GED class for many years, emphasizes that what the student has done *since* leaving a formal educational institution as a younger person is of far greater importance than the grade level achieved. When a student remarks that he or she "loves to read," Dr. Lagger knows that the GED practice test will favorably reflect that sentiment. When a student mutters, "I just want to get it over with!", the test will surely reflect that as well.

Interpreting the scores is a very important opportunity to build self-esteem in the entering student. Although a 45 average is necessary for passing, with a minimum of 35 required by the State of Colorado in each of the five subjects, Dr. Lagger suggests *building* on the 35, rather than simply declaring that the student has failed. "Encouragement and the development of self-confidence are critical for the new student who mustered a great deal of courage just to walk into the school building," Dr. Lagger declares.

Besides the printed GED texts available from publishers, the course offering includes the use of *Scope*, *Science World*, the daily newspaper delivered Wednesdays when the ad sections are extensive, *News For You*, selected educational films from the Denver Public School central media center, sessions in the computer lab, and numerous educational excursions. This multi-media approach is essential to the multi-subject GED testing. Dr. Lagger frequently quotes John Muir, respected naturalist who observed, "When I try to pick up something from the environment, lo and behold, it is connected to everything else!"

Believing firmly in the concept of GED testing as an alternative for those who have dropped out of school, Dr. Lagger reflects, "The direction of people's lives changes dramatically in some cases for those who have passed the GED."

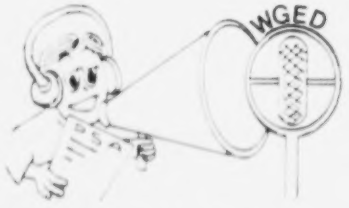
A GED Alumna Writes:

Dear Editor:

My name is Alicia Belen Delgadillo. After twenty-two years as a housewife, I decided to get my high school diploma. Finally, I enrolled at the GED classes at Lincoln School. Then in April of 1982 I received my GED certificate from the Arizona Department of Education.

After getting my GED certificate, I felt the need to further my education. I applied for financial aid at Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona. In the fall of 1984 I enrolled at Pima College in a general secretary course. While I was at Pima, I worked as a student aide and continued with my goal of becoming a secretary.

My teacher advised me to change my major to bilingual secretary because I spoke English and Spanish fluently. Today, I am working as secretary to the Guidance Office at Nogales High School. I plan to continue attending Pima College in the Spring of 1986 and earn my Associate Degree. [We hope Alicia's teachers are reading this! Congratulations and thanks for writing in. Ed.] ∞



Radio PSA Update

The radio public service campaign conducted during the fall resulted in the airing of spots intended to increase public awareness of the GED program on at least 254 stations and two major national networks. Participating stations are located in 174 cities and 43 states. Nearly 300 hours of air time were donated (about 27,000 plays) at an estimated value of $1.8 million. Although it is not possible to estimate the number of persons who contacted local adult education centers as a result of the ads, anecdotal reports clearly indicate an increase in inquiries about classes and in requests for testing in the locations where the announcements were used. The campaign received financial support from three publishing companies. If judged to be of sufficient value, the campaign will be repeated in 1987.

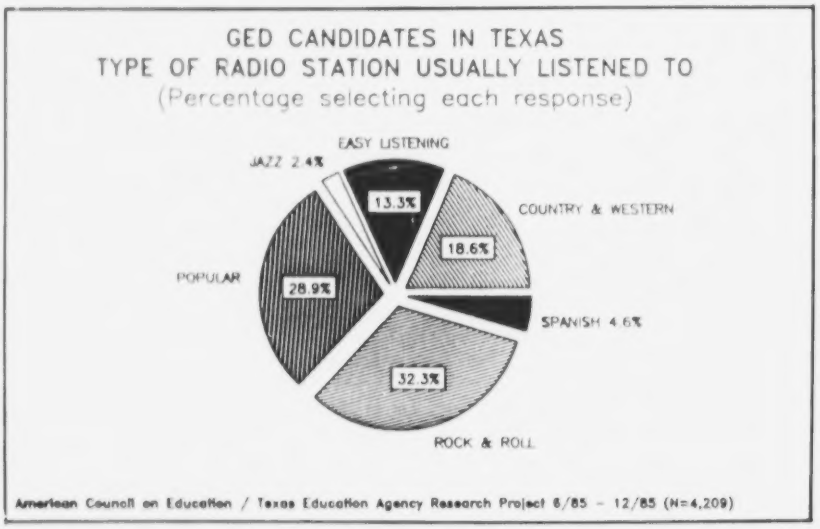
Military Testing: A Dramatic Improvement in Pass Rates

Between October 1, 1985 and September 30, 1986, the GED Testing Service provided testing services to more than 9,800 members of the active-duty military, national guard, and reserves. During that period, a noteworthy 91% of the military examinees qualified for their high school credentials—nearly one and one half times the rate at which examinees passed in 1979. The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), sponsor of the military GED program, suggests that the major reasons for the improved passing rate are improved counseling by base education officers and a more effective system for determining when service members are ready to take the tests. DANTES now requires that service members earn scores of 45 or better on each portion of the Official GED Practice Tests before they are permitted take the GED Tests.

A substantial increase in GED testing by senior Army enlisted personnel is expected early in 1987. By March 1, according to a new Army policy, enlisted personnel in ranks of corporals and specialists (E-4) must have earned a high school diploma or equivalent in order to be considered for promotion to sergeant. There were, as of December 1986, nearly 7,000 E-4s that had yet to complete their GED work. "Our GED program has done a great job in getting non-graduates through high school. But we've still got a way to go if we're to qualify all E-4s for promotion by March 1," said an Army official quoted in the front-page story of *Army Times*, December 8, 1986.

The two paragraphs above illustrate the "up side" of the GED military paradox. At the same time that graduates of GED and other adult high school completion programs are receiving a lower priority for recruitment, the military services are encouraging and assisting current service members who are not high school graduates to complete their equivalency credentials. And, the educational support and assistance programs for military service members are continually being improved and strengthened. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the military's recruitment specialists were as supportive as its education specialists?

Facts and Figures



Speaking of public service announcements, you may be wondering what type of radio station GED examinees listen to. We don't have estimates for everyone who takes the GED Tests, but as part of a research study conducted in Texas, we put that question to GED candidates there. More than 4,000 people taking the tests responded. (See results above.)

The *real* question though, is "What type of radio station do people who could benefit from participation in the GED program (but who have *not* participated in adult education) listen to?" If you have any information that addresses this question, we'd like to share it with our readers.

Military Recruiting and the Adult Student

(continued from p. 1)

met by enlisting traditional high school graduates. (The Army and Navy occasionally have spaces available for GED graduates, but the Marines and Air Force rarely do.) Where the quota cannot be met by traditional graduates, GED graduates can enlist if they earn satisfactory scores on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). *GED graduates can also improve their enlistment priority by completing 15 semester hours of college-level study.*

The American Council on Education has, for many years, taken issue with the military enlistment policies, arguing that educational credential should *not* be used as the basis for enlistment priority and that the practice unfairly discriminates against the majority of GED graduates who do complete their first term of enlistment. In addition, the services deny certain benefits and bonuses to persons who did not graduate from traditional high school programs. Sad to report, we have not been able to persuade the services to modify their policies!

Based on recent attrition studies, and a more detailed classification of educational credentials, the Department of Defense has extended the "second priority" classification to graduates of all adult high school completion programs, graduates of correspondence programs, and graduates of evening and night school programs as of October 1, 1987. For GED graduates, of course, the change has no effect; they have long been classified in the second priority group. For the graduates of other non-traditional programs, however, the chances for enlistment in the Navy and Army will diminish considerably.

Complete copies of three relevant reports can be obtained from the Human Resources Organization, 1100 South Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-4499. These reports are:

"Secondary Education Credentials: A Military Policy Dilemma"

"Education Standards for Military Enlistment and the Search for Successful Recruits"

"The Development of the Educational and Biographical Information Survey"

(see "What Can Teachers Do?," p. 5, col. 3)

The following figures, provided by the Department of Defense, indicate the completion rates of traditional and non-traditional graduates.

PERCENT OF ENLISTEES COMPLETING 24 MONTHS OF THEIR FIRST TERM

Education Credential	ARMY	NAVY	MARINES	AIR FORCE	TOTAL
REGULAR DIPLOMA					
Public High School	77%	84%	76%	86%	80%
Private H.S.	75%	86%	80%	87%	81%
NON-TRADITIONAL DIPLOMA					
GED Credential	62%	72%	61%	72%	66%
Other Equiv. Cert.	73%	90%	49%	70%	70%
Adult Educ. Diploma	68%	80%	53%	69%	68%
Corresp. School	72%	84%	40%	78%	73%
NO CREDENTIAL	62%	71%	60%	81%	64%

Note: Some percentages are based on very small samples and may, therefore, not be reliable estimates.

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Proposed Enlistment Policy

(Army, Air Force, Navy, & Marines)

(Effective: October 1, 1987)

For purposes of enlistment, priority is given to persons in categories 1A and 1B. Persons in other categories may be enlisted as space permits.

1. FIRST PRIORITY CATEGORY ("High School Graduates")

   1A. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA: A diploma is issued to an individual who has attended and completed a 12-year or grade day program of classroom instruction, the diploma must be issued from the school where the individual completed all the program requirements.

   1B. COMPLETED ONE SEMESTER OF COLLEGE: The status of an individual who is a non-high school graduate or alternate high school credential holder, attended a college or university, and completed at least 15 semester or 20 quarter hours of college-level credit. Credit earned through testing, for pursuit of adult education, or for high school equivalency preparation is not applicable.

2. SECOND PRIORITY CATEGORY ("Alternative Credential Holder")

   2A. TEST-BASED EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA: A diploma or certificate of General Education Development (GED) or other test-based high school equivalency diploma. This includes state-wide testing programs such as the California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE), whereby examinees may earn a certificate of competency or proficiency. A state of locally-issued secondary school diploma obtained solely on the basis of such equivalency testing is not to be considered a high school diploma. This is considered an alternate high school credential.

   2B. HIGH SCHOOL CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE: An attendance-based certificate or diploma. These are sometimes called certificates of competency

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or completion but are based on course completion rather than a test such as the GED or CHSPE. A state or locally issued secondary school diploma obtained solely on the basis of an attendance credential is not considered a high school diploma. This is considered an alternate high school credential.

2C. ADULT EDUCATION DIPLOMA: A secondary school diploma awarded on the basis of attending and completing an adult education or "external" diploma program, regardless of whether the diploma was issued by a state or by a secondary or postsecondary educational institution. This is considered an alternate high school credential.

2D. CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL DIPLOMA: A secondary school diploma or certificate awarded upon completion of correspondence school coursework, regardless of whether the diploma was issued by a correspondence school, a state, or a secondary or postsecondary educational institution. This is considered an alternate high school credential.

2E. OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM CERTIFICATE: A certificate or diploma awarded for attending a non-correspondence vocational, technical, or proprietary school for at least 6 months. An individual so coded must also have completed 11 years of regular day school. This is considered an alternate high school credential.

2F. HOME STUDY DIPLOMA: A secondary school diploma or certificate, typically awarded by a state, based upon certification by a parent or guardian that an individual completed their secondary education at home. This is considered an alternate high school credential.

3. THIRD PRIORITY CATEGORY ("Non-high School Graduate") Status of an individual with none of the secondary school credentials listed above.

Advice for Adult Students Who Wish to Enter the Military

Because the military services give a higher priority to the recruitment of persons who have just graduated from a high school day program, you may be unable to enlist in the service of your choice at the time or place you wish. Where spaces are available, you must qualify by earning certain minimum scores on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery; these entrance scores vary by service.

The reason the services do not give you a high priority at enlistment is not because they do not consider your education credential to be as worthy or credible as others. You have earned an educational credential that is acceptable to colleges and employers. However, in the past, persons who earned their diplomas in the way you did have not completed their basic service enlistment as frequently as those who graduated from a traditional high school program.

Still, there are at least three ways that you can improve your chances of gaining enlistment.

- Apply to more than one branch of the military service. The Coast Guard, for example, will consider you on the same basis as it does a traditional high school graduate; the Air Force, Navy, and Marines rarely have any openings. Spaces in the Army are often, but not always, available.
- Apply for enlistment at different times during the year. In the past, there have been more openings in the fall and winter than in the spring and summer (especially near the end of December and March).
- Apply at more than one recruiting station. Openings occur at different times in different locations. Call first, but you may find that you can get into the service by travelling to another city or location.

You can also do the following to improve enlistment priority.

- Enroll in a regular college-level academic or vocational program. Completing 15 semester hours or 20 quarter hours of college-level credit will result in a higher priority at enlistment. If you attend full-time, this can usually be accomplished in less than six months.
- If you left high school only one or two credits short of graduation, return to school and complete the needed classes. With a "regular" diploma, your enlistment priority will be higher and your chances of being able to enlist will improve.

Quite frankly, we wish that the military services would give you the same enlistment priority as they do traditional high school graduates. To date, we in adult education have been unsuccessful in getting the armed services to change their policies. If you agree that the current policy is unfair, write your Congressional representative and Senators asking that they press the Department of Defense for a change. In the meantime, we hope that this information is helpful.

What Can Teachers Do?

As citizens and educators, you should, of course, express your reservations about and displeasure with the policy to your Congressional representative and Senators. From past experience, however, it is likely that the inquiry will be referred to the Department of Defense office for response—and the response will be pretty much along the lines of the one authored by Steve Sellman and published in the July 1985 issue of this newsletter. (Copies of Steve's article entitled "Military Adaptability Screening: A Manpower Management Perspective" can be obtained at no charge by writing to Linda Russell, GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036-1163.)

As adult educators, our major and clear responsibility lies in informing students about the military policies and apprising them of the options available to them. To assist you in this effort, we have prepared two brief pieces that can be reproduced and distributed to students who evidence an interest in the military. Readers are encouraged to copy these and disseminate them as needed.

If you want to express your feelings about the military enlistment policies directly to someone in the Department of Defense, you should write Anita Lancaster, Assistant Director for Accession Policy, U.S. Department of Defense, OASD/FM & P/MM & PP/AP, Pentagon 2B271, Washington, D.C. 20301-4000.

GED Cognitive Levels

Thinking Skills: Synthesis

In this last article of our series on thinking skills (see GED *Items*, Vol.3, Nos 2 through 6 and Vol. 4, No. 1), we will focus on *synthesis*, a higher level thinking skill that is essential to writing.

According to Benjamin Bloom, whose taxonomy is used to classify GED Test items, synthesis is "the putting together of elements and parts so as to form a whole." It is a skill that asks that an individual "draw upon elements from many sources and put these together into a structure or pattern not clearly there before." In the case of the essay—Writing Skills Test, Part II—this is precisely the process that should occur. Like other skill levels in the taxonomy, synthesis requires the prerequisite skills which appear "lower" in Bloom's taxonomy (i.e., knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis. Each of these skills has been discussed in previous issues.)

You may also remember from a previous article that we promised to return to synthesis since it falls "above" analysis but "below" evaluation in Bloom's taxonomy. That is, in terms of Bloom's hierarchy of cognitive skills, synthesis is considered to be a higher level skill than analysis and a prerequisite skill to evaluation. It should thus be noted that while the essay, strictly speaking, is the only part of the GED Tests which is classified as synthesis, this skill is integral to items classified as evaluation.

To illustrate how synthesis is essential to writing, let's review the essay topic presented in *The 1988 Tests of General Educational Development: A Preview*.

> "The automobile has certainly been responsible for many changes in the United States. Some of these changes have improved our lives and some have made life more difficult or unpleasant.
>
> Write a composition of about 200 words describing the effect of the automobile on modern life. You may describe the positive effects, the negative effects, or both. Be specific, and use examples to support your view."

To respond to this topic, a student must first have some *knowledge* about the automobile. Since GED essay topics are designed and field tested for accessibility, students should have little difficulty with the content of any essay topic.

Next, the student will need to *comprehend* the question. What am I asked in this essay topic? How could I restate the question in my own words? What should I focus on in this essay?

Now, the student must consider how to present that focus. First, the main idea must be stated. For example, "The effects of the automobile have been mostly positive." Then that idea should be developed. For example, the student may wish to state three ways in which the automobile has had a positive effect on our society. Having decided on three effects to present in the essay, the examinee must *analyze* the possible relationships of these effects in order to arrive at an organizational theme. For example, the automobile's positive effects could be discussed in some kind of chronological order, that is, early time to present. Or the examinee might wish to order positive effects from least important to most important, or from least to most financially advantageous, and so on. Finally, these three points should be supported by concrete examples which add substance to the student's opinion.

At this point, the student will have called upon several skills: *knowledge* of the subject and rules of grammar, mechanics, and usage; *comprehension* of the question; an *analysis* of the relationships of the effects of the automobile to be included in the essay; and the *application* of rules of organization and grammar while actually writing the essay. Synthesis, as the definition above implies, comes in to play as the writer puts together the elements (ideas) to form a coherent whole (the essay).

Even *evaluation* is a skill implicitly employed as examinees make judgments about the value and clarity of their examples and details in supporting the essay's major theme. All of which is to say: though thinking skills are discussed as a hierarchy, these skills are not used in a set sequence, nor are they employed in isolation. Nowhere is that more apparent in the GED Tests than in the essay.

In fact, several national studies have linked poor writing in general to poor thinking skills. Understanding these thinking skills and how they are a part of the writing process will help our students to *synthesize*—to draw upon knowledge, understanding, analysis and evaluation, and to apply these skills to creative, written thought.

In subsequent issues, we will publish teaching tips on the various content areas, which will implicitly draw on the cognitive skills discussed in this series.

The following chart summarizes the thinking skills discussed in this series.

If you can identify:	The question is testing:	Example
What students must *remember*	Recall	What is the electoral college?
What students must *restate* in other words	Comprehension	How does the electoral college work?
What information is to be *used* to solve the problem	Application	Predict what would happen if the electoral college were eliminated.
What is *broken down* into what parts	Analysis	Differentiate the various roles of the electoral college.
What two pieces of information are to be *combined*	Synthesis	How can the electoral college and the popular vote produce different results?
What students are to express an *opinion* about	Evaluation	In your opinion, should the electoral college be retained or abolished? Defend your choice.

Reprinted with permission from CAPTRENDS Assessment Supplement for Teachers September 1985.

Gas, Electric, and Education?

In January this year, 1.2 million Kentucky homes received a surprise in their utility bills. "Make Earning Your GED Your New Year's Resolution!" said the flyer. A 24-question sample test was also included, along with a toll-free telephone number. Persons were encouraged to complete the sample test and take it to an adult education center.

At the centers, these individuals are then counseled to take the GED Tests, enroll in a GED class, or begin an Adult Basic Education class—depending on the results of the sample test and other diagnostic tests. The promotional program included certificates that could be redeemed at GED testing centers for "free" testing (i.e., $10 of the fee is waived), as well as special free Saturday testing sessions in March and April at 33 Kentucky GED testing centers.

The flyers were sponsored by the state's public utility companies— an unprecedented collaboration among these companies. The estimated $50,000 expense for the special GED testing sessions is being paid by the Kentucky League of Savings Institutions—another first for the 82 savings and loan companies.

Readers interested in developing a similar campaign should contact Libby Walthall, Project Director, GED Foundation, Kentucky Department Of Education, Division of Adult and Community education, 17th floor, Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, KY 40601. Telephone: (502) 564-3921. Libby says she would be happy to answer questions and send copies of their materials.

1987 Examiner's Manual

The 1987 edition of the GED Examiner's Manual has been mailed to all Chief Examiners, GED State Administrators, and State Directors of Adult Education. Copies are available to other persons at a cost of $10; the price includes a copy of the Policies of Departments of Education. Write Linda Russell, GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Ask The Experts . . . That's You

No Shows

Patricia Green-Powell of the Department of Education in Florida wrote GED *Items* in November asking for help with "no-shows," people who register for the GED Test but fail to show up for testing. She wondered about penalties, especially for repeat offenders, and about guidelines for re-scheduling testing for those without valid excuses for having failed to appear.

Both experts responding to our question this month stressed that applicants need to make a commitment to take the test. Mary Orr of Emporia, Kansas, suggests that we not penalize no-shows but take steps instead to prevent the problem initially. She requires GED applicants themselves, not their spouses or parents, to register. Mary says, "It helps the applicant to take responsibility." Her other tip is to get applicants' telephone numbers so that she can, at her discretion, call the no-shows.

B.J. Hollomon of Cleveland, Mississippi, takes a more structured approach. "The results have been most gratifying," he says. "I now have virtually no no-shows." B.J. charges a fee at the time of registration and gives the applicant an appointment letter listing the date, time, and location of testing and explaining that only one rescheduling is allowed for each registration fee. His form letter reads, "If you fail to report on the *SECOND* testing date, or if you report after 7:40 a.m., THE $12.00 FEE IS FORFEITED. In order to be scheduled for testing the THIRD time, there is payable a new fee of $12.00." This appointment letter, which also serves as a receipt for payment, provides the candidate with other useful information, spelling out the length of the test and what the candidate needs to bring (identification and the appointment form) or *not* bring (calculator, paper, etc.) to the testing center. B.J. concludes by saying, "It may work to create a certain commitment in the mind of the candidate."

We appreciate the time B.J. and Mary took to discuss this problem and look forward to more questions sent to "Ask the Experts." Please send questions and proposed solutions to Jean Lowe, GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036. ➵

Admission and Credit Policies for Adult Learners

Almost all colleges and universities are willing to grant college credit for coursework or learning that takes place outside a college setting, according to a new survey by the American Council on Education (ACE).

About 97 percent of higher education institutions have policies accepting credit for extrainstitutional learning, such as credit for courses offered by businesses or the military or for special examination, says ACE's report, *Admission and Credit Policies for Adult Learners*. The most widely accepted method of assessing extrainstitutional learning is by exam; 93 percent of institutions will grant academic credit based on these test results.

Copies of the report, *Admission and Credit Policies for Adult Learners*, are available prepaid at $5.00 for ACE members and $8.00 for nonmembers. Write ACE, Division of Policy Analysis and Research, One Dupont Circle, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036-1193. ➵

Literacy Check-Off

West Virginia's battle against illiteracy gained a valuable new weapon January 1, 1987: the ability of state taxpayers to "check-off" a voluntary contribution to the state's Adult Literacy Education Fund on their state income tax returns.

- Taxpayers may designate a portion of their refunds to the Fund.
- Taxpayers may also "check-off" a contribution to the Fund even if they do not qualify for a refund.

How much does the state hope to realize by the check-off? Calculations are based on the fact that each year more than $70,000 is raised for natural resources programs and a larger amount for child abuse programs via existing check-offs.

For more information about the West Virginia check-off and/or the Fund, write Sally K. Adkins, West Virginia Adult Literacy Coalition, P.O. Box 5622, Huntington, WV 25703 or call (304) 696-2380. ➵

Reprinted by permission from the Coalition's December 1986 newsletter.

The Last Word

Letter Perfect

by Richard Swartz

Two documents came across my desk recently. Call it perverse if you must, but I couldn't help perceiving a connection. The first document was an article published in the *Washington Post* of December 4, 1986, entitled "Johnny Can't Write Either, Survey Finds."

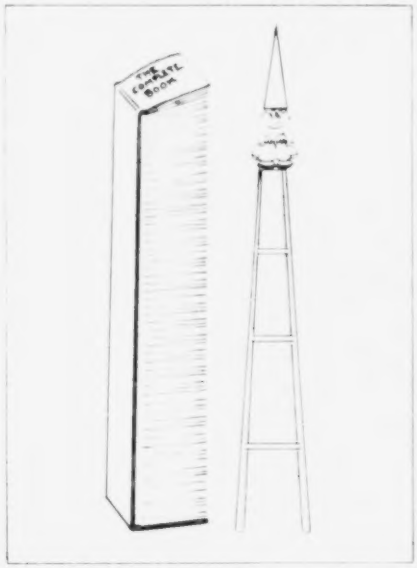
While the article may not offer much in the way of good news about student achievement, it does validate the findings of GEDTS during its research into adding an essay to the GED Writing Skills Test.

The *Post* article reported on the results of the latest study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a Department of Education project conducted by ETS. Here are a couple of findings that should sound familiar to those who've been following GEDTS reports about the writing proficiency of high school seniors and GED examinees:

- "The experts warned that students perform worse in writing than in any other major subject and that the writing problems are linked to serious shortcomings in critical thinking and communication."
- "While students can generally write at a minimal level, they cannot analyze, persuade, or tell a story. . . ."
- "In persuasive writing, less than a third of the students were judged adequate."

The NAEP report also offered some possible solutions to the problem, and these, too, should sound a familiar note. To improve writing instruction, the report suggests, teachers should 1) assign writing more frequently; 2) assign writing in all subjects; and 3) emphasize ideas and organization, not merely grammar and mechanics.

This is where the second document I received comes in: a colorful four-page brochure offering the *SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S COMPLETE LETTER BOOK*. In this book, we are promised, are sample letters to meet every administrator's needs.



"Prove it for yourself—" the ad copy offers, *"the toughest letters you will ever need to write . . . have been written for you! Conquer letter-writing challenges . . . instantly!"*

Here's how it works. Imagine you're a high school principal and you want to fire a maintenance worker. You sit down and compose a letter then, right? Wrong. You flip to Chapter 10 and there, ready to go is "Dismissal of maintenance worker." You may need to fill in the name or something, but if you're firing the person, why not just leave it "Dear Maintenance Worker"?

Some of my other favorites in this brochure were "Support for Threatened Program" (never mind which program or why it's threatened); "Reply to Hostile Editorial" (apparently the *content* of the editorial doesn't matter—just zip off the same angry retort); and "Response to Complaint about Staff Member" (it might be worth the price of the book for a look at *this* one).

After all these years of concern, maybe we don't need to worry that Johnny can't write. What the heck. If we can produce every letter an administrator needs, surely we can do more. Why bother teaching writing at all?

Consider the possibilities: college students could have their book of essays and termpapers, executives their book of memos, editors their book of editorials. And for all of America to buy: *THE COMPLETE BOOK OF ORIGINAL THOUGHT*. ■

Vol. 4, No. 2
March/April, 1987

PLEASE ROUTE TO:

ged ITEMS

General Educational Development Testing Service
American Council on Education
One Dupont Circle—Suite 20
Washington, D.C. 20036-1193

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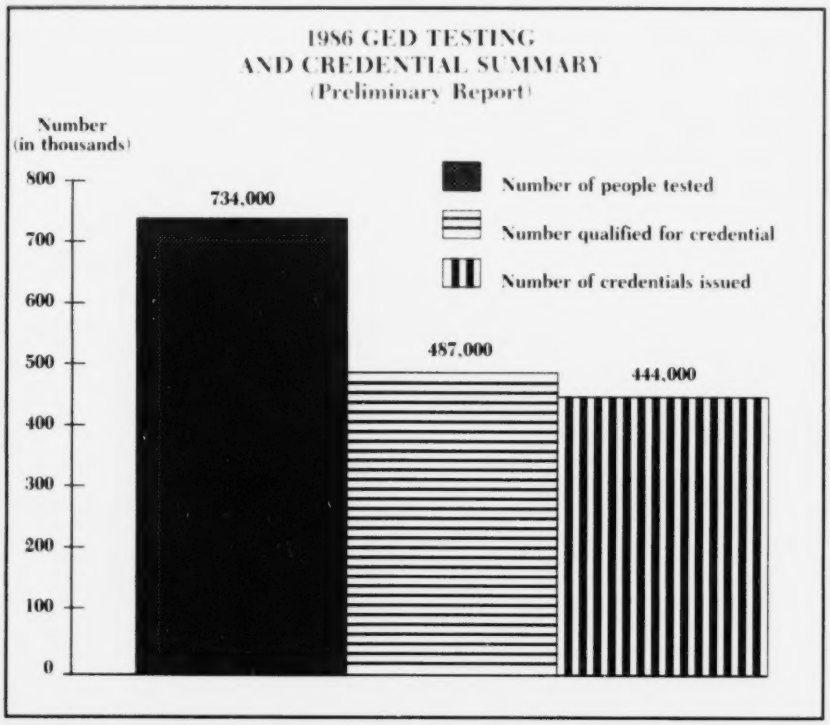
AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION
VOL. 4, NO. 3 May/June 1987 • The Newsletter of the GED Testing Service • Washington, D.C.

1986: GED Testing On The Rise



For the second year in a row, the number of people taking the GED Tests has risen. The latest estimate indicates that over 734,000 people took some form of the GED Tests in 1986. This represents an increase of about three percent, with the number of examinees who passed the test battery and were eligible for an equivalency credential estimated at 487,000—an increase of over four percent from the previous year. The number of credentials awarded by United States and Canadian jurisdictions rose as well to 444,000.

The number of French language and special edition versions of the test battery also increased last year. During 1986 nearly 701,000 people took the English version of the tests, 31,000 took the Spanish version of the tests and 1,600 took the French version of the tests. The audiocassette, braille, and large print editions were administered to approximately 700 individuals with special testing needs.

The 1986 edition of the GED Statistical Report will be published and mailed to all GED Administrators and Chief Examiners during May. Additional copies of the report will be available at that time for $5.00 (prepaid). They may be obtained by writing to "GED Statistical Report," GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Adult Learners With Disabilities: "Section 7" Revised to Increase GED Accessibility

How many disabled adults in your community know about the GED Tests? Do all Chief Examiners know what modifications of the standard testing procedures are allowed for adult learners with disabilities? Has everybody out there read Section 7?

Section 7 (Test Administration Procedures for Special Populations) of the revised 1987 Examiner's Manual contains guidelines for testing adult learners with disabilities. As we reported in the July 1986 issue of GED Items, our ad hoc Committee on Adult Learners with Disabilities met last June to review testing policies and procedures for special editions of the GED Tests. The revised Section 7 is the result of that meeting and of the suggestions we received from a survey distributed to over 50 experts on disabilities.

While the ad hoc committee and our consultants did not recommend major changes in current procedures for testing special populations, Section 7 does contain some new information. One change is to allow hearing candidates with auditory perceptual

(continued on page 2)

Inside *Items*

Resources for Adult Learners with Disabilities
Ask the Experts
Essays and Disabled Students
and more

GED Success Story

Adult Learner with Disability Battles the Odds

Tutors, counselors, and others at Portland Community College, Portland, Oregon, who helped 54-year-old Jereen Davis pass her GED are grateful for one of the best success stories in years.

Handicapped from birth by cerebral palsy, her mobility even more limited in recent years by arthritis and a bone disorder, Jereen nevertheless is making her debut as a cottage industry entrepreneur, armed with the GED certificate she finally earned in March, 1986.

For the first 20 or more years of her life, Jereen said, she tried to cure herself of her handicap. To strengthen hands which were difficult to control, she took up weaving at the age of ten. Her loom dominates the small living room of her Southeast Portland apartment and samples of her work decorate the room.

> "Achieving independence has taken a lifetime of effort. . . ."

She also taught herself to type, although it took her 13 years to train her fingers to work properly on the keyboard.

"Anything I could do with my hands, I did," she recalled.

Through childhood and adolescence there were special classes at Richmond school, a home teacher, and a family move out of Portland to the farming community of Scholls. "I wanted to do farm work, but no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't," she said.

Finally, during the years at Scholls, Jereen realized that her life-long battle "to get over" cerebral palsy was a losing one. She also understood how difficult it was for her family to deal with the situation.

The opening she needed came in 1959, after Jereen read about a training workshop the Cerebral Palsy Association had started in Portland. She worked there and started brushing up on basic skills.

Eventually, Jereen turned to Portland Community College for Adult Basic Education classes, first at Southeast Center "where I had a ball" and finally at Sylvania Campus in Southwest Portland.

There, in addition to ABE and GED instructors, she started a five-year association with Carolyn J. Schmeer, a counselor for students with learning disabilities.

"Jereen's skills were at grade-school level when she came to us, so getting her ready for the GED was a long process. She worked on one subject at a time, took that test, and went on to the next," Schmeer remembered.

By that time, walking more than a few steps at a time had become virtually impossible for Jereen. But thanks to a Portland Rotary Club's gift of a wheelchair, she was able to study for the GED on the sprawling Sylvania campus.

Achieving independence has taken a lifetime of effort, Jereen acknowledged, and it involved the help of many people, but the major key was her own determination.

"I'm just too stubborn to give up," she said.

Excerpted from Press Release, Portland Community College, District Relations, Portland, Oregon 97219

HEATH = HELP!

The HEATH Resources Center is the National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Handicapped Individuals. HEATH is updating and expanding its Campus Resource File, which currently includes almost one thousand current programs which integrate adult learners with disabilities into secondary and postsecondary education, training, and employment opportunities to include Adult Basic Education programs.

HEATH would appreciate any of the following information about your program or other programs specifically serving or having served adult learners with physical, mental, or learning disabilities: an abstract, brochure, or publicity; type of disability served; type of services provided and by whom; type of setting; and contact persons.

The HEATH Resource Center will use the information you provide to assist in updating their current publication, in addition to writing newsletter articles highlighting model programs. HEATH will also share information about the kinds of services, adaptations, and programs that enable adult learners with disabilities to develop their full potential for independence, employment, and continued education within their community.

Please contact HEATH at: One Dupont Circle, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036, or call toll-free 1-800-544-3284.

Adult Learners With Disabilities *(continued from page 1)*

problems to read the instructions that would normally be read to them by the Chief Examiner. Examples of other adaptations are the use of audiocassette, braille, and large print editions for adults with visual perception deficiences. Candidates who complete the braille or audiocassette editions are also permitted to use an abacus, "talking calculator," stylus and slate, or a brailler as "scratch paper." These candidates will be allowed to use any braille writing device for the essay portion of the Writing Skills Test, or to dictate the essay. Additional time can be permitted for the audiocassette and braille editions.

Section 7 contains guidelines about further use of alternate examiners, interpreters for GED candidates with listening skills deficiencies, and outlines of the adaptations that are allowed for those with other physical and affective skills deficiences.

All Chief Examiners are encouraged to read Section 7 closely and let us know if it answers your questions about special administrations of the GED Tests. If there are disabled candidates for the GED whose needs aren't being met by the policies outlined in Section 7, please contact us. Jean Lowe, Assistant Director of GEDTS, is already planning the 1988 GED Examiner's Manual. That manual will include a section on administering the essay to disabled adult learners. Your input on this and related issues is welcome.

GED's a Winner

The American Council on Education recently received an award for its programs to help disabled students achieve their educational goals. ACE was awarded $5,000 in a competition sponsored by the National Organization on Disability and the J.C. Penney Co. The GED Testing Service was one of the programs cited by the awards jury, for giving disabled adults a second chance at a high school credential. More than 700 persons take the special editions of the GED Tests every year.

Other ACE programs that were recognized by the awards jury are Project HEATH (Higher Education and Adult Training for people with Handicaps), and ACE's annual survey, "American Freshman: National Norms," which measures the participation of disabled students in higher education.

Adult Education at Gallaudet: The Programs, the Problems, and Some Classroom Practices

by Leslie Proctor

The concept of lifelong education is especially valued at Gallaudet University, the only university in the world established to provide higher education for deaf people. Gallaudet University's College for Continuing Education also provides opportunities for national outreach and models for local service provision through five Regional Centers, Summer and Extension Programs, and the National Academy and Programs in Adult and Community Education.

Adult Basic Education, Adult Community Education, and Hearing-Impaired Programs are units within the Programs in Adult and Community Education (PACE). The Coordinator of Adult Basic Education, Joan Ehrlich, oversees campus-located classes and offers assistance to other area programs that accommodate deaf students. Joan also provides technical assistance and training to service providers nationally. Provision and development of appropriate materials is facilitated by Leslie Proctor, the Materials Development Specialist.

Since a large percentage of deaf people in the United States read below the fifth grade level, many students who leave secondary programs find a need to upgrade their educations for employment and personal reasons. Because the GED is required for many job opportunities, students want to work toward that goal in particular.

However, passing the GED is very difficult for deaf people and there is concern related to the appropriateness of the GED for these students. The Adult Basic Education program at Gallaudet University would like to keep better track of deaf students who take the GED and how well they perform, with feedback from other programs that serve deaf adults throughout the nation. This will give deaf educators a better idea of how to approach the problem.

Classroom Practices

Sign language interpreters or oral interpreters for deaf people who do not sign may be used to facilitate communication when a deaf person participates in a class with hearing people. Additional accommodations such as electronic loop systems with microphones to augment reception through a deaf person's hearing aid, use of visual media to clarify instruction, the instructor facing students to allow opportunities for speechreading when possible, proper lighting without glare, handouts, provisions for note-takers (perhaps other students making carbon paper copies), can enable a deaf person to participate in a class with hearing students.

A typical lesson for a GED class may use a dialogue approach with handouts and board work. Students take turns reading the sentences and changing designated words to their appropriate forms. They then discuss the reason for choosing a specific form. The exercise ends with questions asked about the dialogue. Students must attempt to answer in complete English sentences. All instruction and conversation in the classroom occurs through the simultaneous method of communication which includes any combination of signed English, spoken English, and American Sign Language. For homework, students must write the answers in complete sentences. Texts presently used in this GED class are a standard GED writing exercise book, as well as *Practical English Structure* by the Gallaudet University Press. The teacher uses sections of these books to develop diagnostic tests to help determine student needs and decide what to teach.

Appropriate instructional goals, methods, and materials are reflected in Individual Adult Education Plans. The teacher and student discuss what the student wants and what the test results show. The plan that is drawn up is revised as needed to reflect new information, students' progress, and their interests and needs.

Innovative use of videotaping is also used to motivate and provide feedback for students to improve their communications skills. English grammar is taught as it relates to American Sign Language, a visual language which has its own grammatical conventions. Vocabulary learning is helped by using role play and visuals. The overhead projector is a valuable tool in presenting instruction while still being able to face the students. Print materials need to be large enough to be seen comfortably and the overhead image turned off when attention is focused on the instructor or other students.

Teaching Materials for the Deaf

Audiovisual instruction is a medium that can be made accessible to deaf readers. Captioned films with lesson plans may be obtained by contacting Captioned Films for the Deaf, 5000 Park Street North, St. Petersburg, Florida 33709 (800) 237-6213, TDD* or voice. Closed captioned television programs are accessed by the use of a caption decoder. Computer-assisted instruction also offers additional individual learning opportunities.

Many materials that are appropriate for GED purposes for hearing people are also appropriate with modifications or accommodations for deaf people. Some companies such as Dormac in Beaverton, Oregon, Frank Richards in Phoenix, New Mexico, T.J. Publishers in Silver Spring, Maryland, The National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, New York, The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf in Washington, D.C., and Publications from the Gallaudet University Press, Public Service Materials, and Pre-College Outreach Materials are especially suited for use with hearing impaired students. For more information on specific materials needed and to share information on deaf students in GED, please contact the A.B.E. Program at Gallaudet University, 215 College Hall, 800 Florida Avenue, NE, Washington, D.C. 20002. Phone (800) 672-6720 ext. 5044, TDD* or Voice.

*TDD refers to Telecommunications Device for the Deaf. This equipment looks like a small typewriter with paper or digital readout and enables a deaf person to have access to telephone communication with other TDD users.

Staff Development: What Works?

Want to know what makes for good staff development? What principles seem to apply everywhere? Some initial ideas have been compiled by the National Adult Basic Education Staff Development Consortium. Write for the *Principles and Techniques for Effective ABE Staff Development*. Copies are available free from: James Parker; Division of Adult Education; U.S. Department of Education; Washington, D.C. 20202-5515

There will be NO July issue of GED *Items*. The newsletter will resume in September with a double issue.

1-in-20 College Freshmen are GED Grads

A national survey of United States colleges and universities reveals that about 120,000 freshmen were admitted in fall 1984 on the basis of GED scores. That is, nearly one out of every 20 freshmen admitted in that year were GED graduates. Full-time enrollments accounted for slightly more than half of these. Enrollments by GED graduates were proportionally more frequent at public institutions and two-year colleges — but GED graduates attended all types and levels of institutions.

Students with satisfactory GED scores will be considered for admission, the survey found, at 92% of the nation's colleges. Most institutions, however, require either a GED credential of certain minimum scores above those needed to earn an equivalency credential (another reason to encourage GED students to aspire to their highest level of performance).

Colleges will also consider students who have completed their high school level work in other adult-oriented education programs. While 91% of the institutions that will admit students who did not graduate with a traditional diploma accept GED graduates, 46% will also admit students who earned an adult high school diploma and 20% will also admit students holding a competency-based high school diploma.

These results are part of the first comprehensive national survey of college admission and credit-granting policies for adult learners. Copies of the American Council on Education's Higher Education Panel Report No. 72 can be obtained (for $8.00 prepaid) from: HEP, American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

GED Tests in the Republic of the Marshall Islands

The Republic of the Marshall Islands, as the newest participant in the GED Testing program, will issue a High School Equivalency Diploma to candidates achieving a score of 40 on each of the five tests or an average standard score of 45. Tony Jetnil, Chief of Secondary and Higher Education, will serve as GED Administrator and Birash Joash as Chief Examiner. Welcome to the GED Testing Program!

Learning Disability—A Checklist

Educational psychologists, psychological diagnosticians, and neurologists are usually consulted to assess the degree of learning disability and to determine the strengths and learning styles for future development. Informed observation, however, may assist friends, parents, counselors, and teachers to suggest and encourage professional assessment. Professionals indicate that a learning disabled person may exhibit several or many of the behaviors listed below.

- Demonstrates marked difficulty in reading, spelling, and/or using numerical concepts in contrast with average to superior skills in other areas.
- Has poorly formed handwriting—may print instead of using script; writes with an inconsistent slant; has difficulty with certain letters; and spaces words unevenly.
- Has trouble listening to a lecture and taking notes at the same time.
- Is easily distracted by background noise or visual stimulation; difficulty in paying attention; and/or may appear to be hurried and anxious in one-to-one meetings.
- Has trouble understanding or following directions; is easily overwhelmed by a multiplicity of directions or overstimulation; and may not understand information the first time it is given and may need to have it repeated.
- Confuses similar letters such as "b and d", or "p and q"; confuses the order of letters in words repeating "was" for "saw," "teh" for "the"; and may misspell the same word several different ways in the same composition.
- Omits or adds words, particularly when reading aloud.
- Confuses similar numbers such as 3 and 8, 6 and 9, or changes the sequence of numbers such as 14 and 41; and/or has difficulty copying numbers accurately and working with numbers in columns.
- Exhibits severe difficulty in keeping to simple schedules; and/or repeatedly forgets things, loses possessions, and generally seems "personally disorganized."
- Appears clumsy or poorly coordinated.
- Seems disorganized in space—confuses up and down, right and left; gets lost in buildings; and is disoriented when familiar environment is rearranged.
- Seems disoriented in time—is often late to class, unusually early for appointments, unable to finish assignments in the standard time period, or rushes to complete them not using all the time allocated.
- Displays excessive anxiety, anger or depression because of the difficulty in coping with school or social situations.
- Misinterprets the subtleties in language, tone of voice, or social situations.

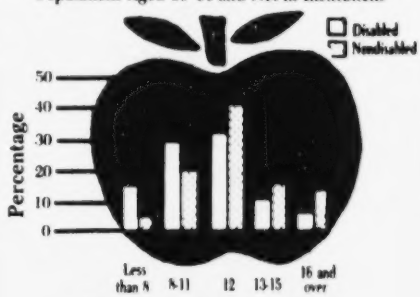
Checklist printed in *HEATH Resource Center*, originally adapted from GWU (George Washington University) *Access*, Spring 1983.

Facts and Figures

The 1980 Census shows that 12,320,000 Americans between the ages of 16 and 64 [who are not in institutions] report a disability which limits the amount or kind of work they can do or prevents them from working altogether. This group represents 8.5% of the 145 million Americans of working age, or slightly more than one in twelve.

As a group, disabled persons are *much less well-educated* than are others of working age. Only one disabled in every five has attended some college, compared with one in three nondisabled individuals in the 16-64 age range. By contrast, disabled persons are more than four times as likely to have fewer than eight years of schooling as are nondisabled working age adults.

Years of School Completed: Disabled and Nondisabled Populations Aged 16-64 and Not in Institutions



Years of School Completed

Source: The information in this month's Facts and Figures was provided by the staff of the American Council on Education's Higher Education And Training for people with Handicaps. *Disabled Adults in America, (1985).* Based on Current Population Survey, March 1981. The report was prepared by Frank Bowe for The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Resources for Adult Learners with Disabilities

Since our cover story on adult learners with disabilities, GEDTS has received a number of requests for teaching materials for students with a variety of testing needs. The following is a partial list of resources courtesy of William R. Langner of the U.S. Department of Education, Division of Adult Education.

- **Adult Basic Education for the Deaf**

A Student Handbook for A.B.E., Multi-handicapped Deaf Adults, and a Manual for Instruction of Independent Living Skills.
Available from:
Joan Ehrlich
Adult Basic Education Specialist
Room 213, College Hall
Gallaudet College
800 Florida Avenue, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 651-5649
cost: cost of reproduction

- **Adult Learners with Disabilities**

Academic Assessment and Remediation of Adults with Learning Disabilities: A Resource Series for Adult Basic Education Teachers

The purpose of the project was to develop materials for teachers who instruct learning disabled adults. Titles of the seven booklets are: *Description and Definition of Learning Disabilities, Appraisal and Assessment of Learning Disabilities, Assessment and Remediation of Written Language, Assessment and Remediation of Reading, Assessment and Remediation of Mathematics*, and *Occupational and Career Information*. Available from:
Dr. Janie Rodgers
Five County Adult Education Program
500 College Avenue
Athens, GA 30610-1299
(404) 353-8522
cost: cost of reproduction

- **The Use of Peer Tutoring in a Residential Facility for the Physically Handicapped.** The purpose of this project was to use selected institutionalized individuals to tutor peers who lacked basic reading and mathematics skills. A training manual and final report describe the peer tutoring approaches used in the project.
Available from:
Priscilla Hitchcock
Good Shepherd Home and Rehabilitation Hospital
6th and St. John's Streets
Allentown, PA 18103
(215) 776-3111
cost: cost of microfiche reproduction

Additional Resources

- **Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona,** has developed a writing course for the deaf which centers around videos and accompanying workbooks to which they add mini-lectures, exercises, games, and presentations. The videos are performances of ASL literature by deaf people for deaf people. From this material, they isolate important vocabulary and syntactic structures. They then develop transcriptions, translations, a video dictionary, and a workbook full of exercises in *both* languages.

For further information, please contact:
Richard L. Brodesky, Helene Cohen, or Laurence Hayes
Arts Division
Pima Community College
2202 West Anklam Road
Tucson, AZ 85709

- **Financial Aid Cassette for Visually Impaired Students**

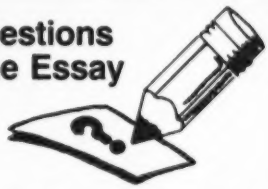
The Office of Student Financial Assistance now has available a cassette recording giving information on financial aid in 1986-1987 for visually impaired students.

The cassette is a telephone dialogue between an information specialist at the Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Information Center and a handicapped student. The specialist explains the department's financial aid programs and discusses state and private sources of aid for handicapped students.

If you would like to receive these free cassettes, please write to
Cassette
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Student Financial Assistance
Room 4051, ROB-3
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

GED *Items* is published bi-monthly by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education. This newsletter is not copyrighted and readers are invited to copy any part of the newsletter that has not been previously copyrighted. Credit should be given in accordance with accepted publishing standards. *Editor:* Susan Robinson. *Associate Editors:* Richard Metcalf and Douglas Whitney. *Contributing Editors:* Jean Lowe, Andrew Malizio, and Wayne Patience. *Contributors:* Joyce Downey, Linda Russell, David Messersmith, and Rich Swartz. *Production and Circulation Manager:* Suzette Stone.

More Questions About the Essay



Some have asked what will happen if an examinee turns in a blank paper, an illegible essay, or an "off-topic" essay (i.e., one written on a topic other than the one assigned). It is important for everyone to note that *no* score can be reported for the Writing Skills Test if the examinee's essay is blank, illegible, or "off-topic." As a result, the examinee will have to take the *entire* Writing Skills Test again.

Benefits and Disappointments: Alberta Style

Participants in the Alberta High School Equivalency Program (AHSEP) can complete their secondary education by passing the GED Tests or by receiving a satisfactory assessment of some educational and relevant personal factors. In a recently published study of the perceived benefits of completing one of these programs, Barry Carbol and Thomas Maguire found that, in retrospect, the personal benefits outweighed the educational and employment benefits. They noted, however, that program graduates held their own in terms of employment rates during a period of increasing unemployment in the province.

It will probably come as no surprise to learn that the researchers found that persons who had failed the GED Tests found little benefit, but it may be more surprising that the program's graduates often found there to be less benefit to passing the GED than they had expected. This result, found also by others, should not lead us to discourage adults from entering a high school completion program; it may, however, cause us all to be a little more reserved in making claims about the likely benefits from completing the program. While research strongly affirms that nearly all graduates will perceive some personal benefits, many will find that their work and education opportunities are still somewhat limited.

Interested readers can find the full study reported in the March 1986 issue of the *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research* (volume 32, no.1, pp. 66-76).

Essays and Disabled Students

Although the specific language for the 1988 Examiner's Manual has not yet been written, we'd like to state our intention with respect to the essays written by students with certain physical disabilities. *All* GED examinees will be responsible for producing written responses to the essay question. Those who are unable to produce a written response without assistance are to be given the opportunity to produce a draft response, and edit it, in any acceptable manner. (Acceptable, here, means any way that clearly results in a written composition produced and edited by the individual student.) For example, an examinee who is unable to hold a pen will be permitted to type a response using any adapted keyboard, stylus, etc. Similarly, he or she would be permitted to dictate an answer to be copied verbatim by an amanuensis. All these ways, and others, would be acceptable for producing the initial draft. Similarly, the editing can be done by any acceptable means. In all cases, the result is a completed piece of writing that will be scored in exactly the same way as those produced in the standard fashion; the Writing Skills Test score will, of course, consist of a composite of multiple choice and essay portions for all examinees. At this time, we do not see the need (nor do we intend) to "waive" the essay portion for any examinee; obviously, on the other hand, we have to be quite willing to accommodate the physical disabilities that make writing with a pen impossible.

Some GED Communication Strategies

(This article is the first in a series on ways to improve your marketing strategies. Questions about specific marketing problems, or suggestions for future articles are welcome. Please address these to Victoria Falco, Director of Marketing.)

There are several easy rules that can be followed to help improve the effectiveness of our communications with prospective GED examinees and other adult learners.

Rule *#1 - Define the purpose of the brochure clearly.* If the purpose cannot be stated clearly in a brief sentence, the message that is sent to the reader will not be effective. A blurred message can be worse than no message at all.

Rule *#2 - Use a clear image of the potential reader to guide your writing.* Imagine that you are talking directly to someone, for example, who has come to you with questions about preparing to take the GED Tests. By writing as if you are giving direct answers to the questions most frequently asked in this situation, you will produce a more effective brochure.

Rule *#3 - Make it easy to read.* Use headlines or highlighting to make the most important points grab the readers' attention. A question and answer format or itemization, as used in this article, (Rule *#1*, Rule *#2*, etc.) are also effective. Long, continuous paragraphs are generally the least effective way to capture the readers' attention.

Rule *#4 - Use a personal approach.* Don't say "Many people express concerns about returning to the classroom." Your brochure will be much more effective if you say "You may have concerns about returning to the classroom." This same rule holds true for letters. Remember that you are writing directly to someone. Also keep in mind that *people* write letters, not institutions. Don't use "we" when you should be using "I," and don't use an institution when you should be using a person. ("I hope that you will call ..." not "The GED Testing Service hopes that you will call ....") ➵

News and Notes

Dr. Norman Shapiro, Director of Adult Education for the Sequoia Union High School District in Redwood City, California, developed a means of publicity for recruiting additional students to GED classes. Working in cooperation with the managers of the five local McDonald's restaurants within the boundaries of the Sequoia District, over 40,000 paper "tray liners" which gave information on GED classes available through Sequoia District Adult School were used by McDonald's during the months of December and January.

Dr. Shapiro felt that this was an excellent method of reaching potential students who need to earn their GED certificates or complete a high school diploma. In addition to the tray liners, bag stuffers were also used by the McDonald's stores.

A 74-year-old Campbellton resident is the oldest New Brunswicker to ever successfully complete high school equivalency tests. Mary Leona Allain received her certificate from Advanced Education and Training Minister Mabel DeWare in a ceremony held at the New Brunswick Community College this past year.

Mrs. Allain wrote the General Educational Development (GED) Tests at the age of 73, and is excited by her results. She hopes other senior New Brunswickers who don't have a high school diploma will be encouraged to follow her example. She is one of about 1,400 individuals who successfully gained their high school equivalency standing in the province in the past year. ➵

West Virginia Raises GED Score Requirement

Effective March 20, 1987, the minimum score requirement in West Virginia was raised to a minimum standard score of 40 or better on each of the five GED Tests; an average score of 45 is also required. Formerly, an examinee could qualify for an equivalency diploma by meeting only one of these requirements. Persons who began testing before April 1, 1987 can qualify for an equivalency diploma under the old standards at any time before April 1, 1990.

At the same time, changes were made in the age requirements for incarcerated youth and in the waiting time for certain 18 year olds. A copy of the new policies and further information about the changes can be obtained from James F. Snyder, GED Testing Program Office, Bureau of General, Special, and Professional Education, West Virginia Department of Education, Capitol Complex, Building 6, Room 318, Charleston, WV 25305. ➵

A GED Farewell

On April 1, Drew Malizio was promoted to Assistant Director of ACE's Division of Policy Analysis and Research. Drew is known to many of you as one of our most effective and friendly staff members and has, during his eight years with the testing service, been instrumental in helping us establish a strong program of research.

Major contributions to the Annual Statistical Report, Standardization, and Item Tryout activities are among Drew's other significant achievements. Drew has also made his mark as a dedicated Director of the Credit-by-Exam Program and as the author of the *Items* column, "Facts and Figures." As Doug Whitney, Director of GED, wrote to the GED Administrators, "It's going to be a different place without Drew, and I know that you will miss him, too. But, a talented and ambitious researcher, and effective communicator, doesn't remain a secret very long! At DPAR, Drew will, of course, still be here at ACE and will, no doubt, carry his commitment to the adult education and GED programs into the survey research work he'll be doing with the nation's post-secondary schools."

Drew's colleagues echo this tribute. We will miss his warmth, the annual appearance as our very own Santa, and his kind praise always for his colleagues. Drew has never headed a project where everyone involved didn't get generous and public thanks for their efforts. This kind of collegiality reminds us often of the team we really are. This month it's a poignant reminder that some "players" are beyond replacing.

Turnaround Time for Essay Scoring

Dennis Hughes, GED Administrator in New York, has recently sent GED *Items* some reassuring news about the additional time required for scoring essays. New York, which instituted the essay portion of the Writing Skills Test in July 1986, scores all tests in Albany. Hughes reports that the essay has added only four days to their turnaround time. 54% of candidates are sent their results in 15-16 days, the remainder within an average of 22-23 days. He says, "I hope that this information will help alleviate some anxiety about tremendous delays in reporting scores to candidates after the essay part of the Writing Skills Test is introduced nationwide in 1988."

Ask the Experts . . . That's You!

Several readers responded to the question from Don Martin of Visalia, California, concerning assisting ESL students with the transition from ESL classes to GED preparation. Their advice ranges from motivational techniques to recommendations for specific textbooks. Although GEDTS does not evaluate or endorse any published materials, we will include readers' recommendations in this column.

Dennis Terdy, Arlington Heights, Illinois sent us the proceedings of the *Illinois Forum on the Second Language Learner in Adult Education*, a conference held in 1981 to examine the needs of ESL students who are entering other academic programs. Two important themes are 1) improving academic counseling services to ESL learners, and 2) simultaneously sensitizing these other programs to ESL needs. One paper describes shared methodologies in ABE and ESL for reading and writing instruction. To obtain the proceedings send $5.50 (includes postage) to Dennis Terdy, Illinois ESL/Adult Ed Service Center, 500 South Dwyer Ave., Arlington Heights, IL 60005.

In Savannah, Georgia, Caroline Bridgers reports, graduation ceremonies include speeches by ESL/GED graduates to encourage others to pursue the GED. Preparation for the test includes discussion of news stories, reading instruction using Barnell-Lofts' *Specific Skills Series* to improve the interpretive skills and idiomatic vocabulary of GED/ESL students.

Ted Sodios and Bob Reilly of Alameda, California, provide counseling for ESL students who take the *GED Practice Tests*. After analyzing errors, teachers assign students to appropriate workbooks in Contemporary's *Building Basic Skills* series. More advanced students use Amsco's *Mastering Social Studies* for test-taking tips and a unit on charts and graphs. Students with strong reading skills also have success with Steck-Vaughn's *Scorebooster #2*.

NOW FOR THE NEXT QUESTION . . .

A reader called recently to ask for help in establishing a broad-based advisory committee. Please send your advice to: Jean Lowe, Ask the Experts Column, GED *Items*, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036. ▬

AAACE Announces New Series on Teaching Adults

AAACE, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, announces its new series on teaching adults, published jointly with Scott, Foresman and Company. The series contains practical advice and information on becoming a more effective adult educator; the subjects are suitable for self-study or as topics for in-service discussions. These booklets are:

- *Being Responsive to Adult Learners*. Editor, Sharon Merriam. This 50 page booklet offers practical ideas for facilitating the learning of adult students, along with specific examples of how such strategies can be applied in adult continuing education settings.
- *Teaching Reading to Adults*. Editor, Brad Courtenay. To respond to the needs of today's retirement-aged learners, providers must understand the developmental stage of the mature person. This booklet provides an overview of the older adult's needs, and discusses how to develop, conduct, and evaluate programs for older learners.
- *Using Technology in Adult Education*. Editor, David Gueulette. This booklet focuses on planning for and utilizing media and technology to expand teaching techniques and learning strategies in an adult education setting. Topics covered include general application of media in adult instruction; new technology and its applications; and practical suggestions for developing and using instructional materials and media.

The series comes in a softcover format which permits widespread use in any teaching program. Prices are as follows: 1-2 copies: $3.95 each; 3-5 copies: $3.50 each; 6-10 copies: $3.25 each; and 11+ copies: $3.00 each. Enclose the total amount plus six percent of the total for shipping and handling (minimum .75 charge). All orders must be prepaid. Checks, money orders, VISA and MasterCard are accepted. (Include credit card number, expiration date, and cardholder signature.) Indicate which pamphlet titles you are requesting. Checks are payable to Scott, Foresman & Co., 1900 East Lake Avenue, Room 1706, Glenview, IL 60025. ▬

The Last Word

Justice By Auction

by Richard Swartz

May is the month when spring is full upon us. And for educators—adult and otherwise—spring is conference season. A common lament among educators is that so many conference sessions are a waste of time, that they deal with either the obvious or the irrelevant. Some of these charges are justified (as in the case of a concurrent session provocatively entitled: "The Importance of Silence in Non-Verbal Communication"), and some aren't. My experience is that you never know what you're going to learn at a conference; sometimes you come away just generally revitalized, sometimes you pick up a bit of practical advice, and sometimes you learn something that has nothing whatever to do with the meeting itself.

The last time I went to a conference what I learned about was not the writing process but the judicial process. Seems I invited this lesson when I took a cab to the airport, leaving my car parked in its usual spot on the street in front of my house. When I returned from the conference, I was greeted by a fifty dollar ticket for failing to move my car on street-cleaning day.

I arrived for my day in court with the confidence of the righteous: I had been away when the signs were posted and when the streets were cleaned, and I had the airline ticket to prove it. About three thousand other innocents were already lined up, four abreast in the hall, when I arrived. Boy, I thought, they must do a lot of street cleaning in this city.

I learned early in life that when I take my place in a long line of people, that line ceases to move forward. Thus, I was not surprised when, after thirty minutes of waiting, I had moved not an inch. Of course, one of my options was to write the check for the fifty bucks and save myself the time, an option I hadn't considered until this moment because I had not foreseen that Parking Ticket Court was such a popular part of town.

I now began to consider this option seriously, though, for two reasons: first, I was raised to recognize that people in authority are always *right*, and I secretly suspected that, airplane ticket or not, my car was in a spot it shouldn't have been in and I was going to have to pay; second, I hadn't brought my lunch.

My defense began to appear a little more solid to me when I heard a man behind me explaining why he was contesting his parking ticket. "See here," he said, showing someone the writing on his copy of the ticket, "it says 'red.' My car's not *red;* it's *maroon*."

About this time the people whom I was trained to recognize as always right took a look at the mob in the hall and decided that this "due process" thing had gone a bit too far. A prosecutor began roaming the length of the line. "Half price!" he shouted. "Pay half price and walk on outa here! Otherwise it looks like an all day affair, folks."

This announcement precipitated a modest migration toward the pay window, along with a swell of excited chatter. Beside me, a man pleaded with his wife: "Honey, it's only a ten dollar ticket to begin with! What's five bucks?" The glare she returned to him told of a parker who'd been unduly wronged.

Before long the prosecutor was back at work, renewing his invitation. He paused right beside me, and I agonized over the price I should attach to my honor. "Half price!" he declared again. Behind me, he of the maroon car said: "'Zat mean about twenty-five bucks for a fifty dollar ticket?"

"Just about," replied the prosecutor.

"Nah, that's still too much," the man behind me said. "I'll give you ten bucks."

I grinned, waiting to see the fury of justice swoop down upon this scofflaw.

With the swiftness of a used-car salesman, the prosecutor replied: "You find two more like you and we gotta deal."

My hand shot up involuntarily, and the prosecutor wrote an official "10" along with his initials on the ticket. I paid my ten bucks at the discount window and made my way out of the throng, happy and free at a fifth of the cost. As I passed, I noticed the woman and her husband who had been standing beside me. He looked glum and frustrated. She looked bored but right.

So now, when I'm debating whether or not to attend a particular conference, I don't pay too much attention to who the keynote speaker is, or to whether or not the concurrent sessions address one of my special interests. The "when" has become more important than the "what." And to see if the conference dates are free, I no longer check my appointment book; I check with the Department of Streets and Sanitation. ⬅

Vol. 4, No. 3
May/June, 1987

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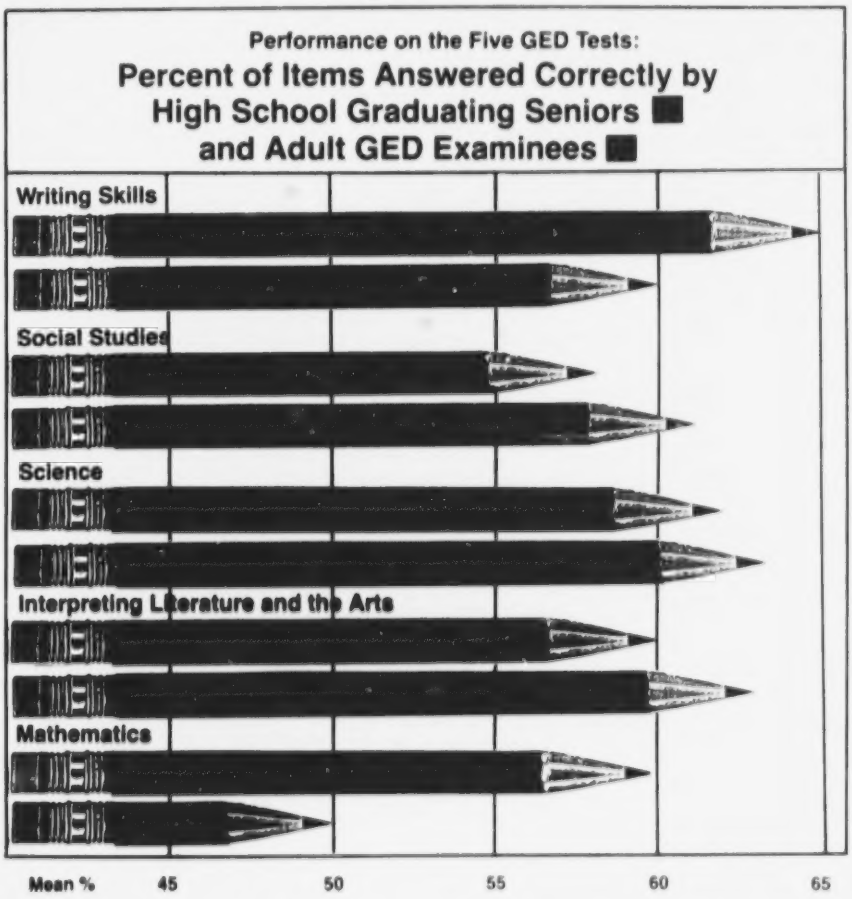
VOL. 4, NO. 4 September/October 1987 • The Newsletter of the GED Testing Service • Washington, D.C.

GED Examinees vs. High School Seniors:

First Results of 1988 GED Tests



Wayne Patience, Associate Director, of the GED Testing Service announced the results of the 1987 standardization of the revised GED Tests at the 16th Annual GED Administrators Conference in Seattle, Washington. These results, shared with an audience of GED Administrators from the United States and its territories, Canada, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, were summarized by Wayne in the form of a challenge: "The GED passing rate may be adversely affected by the introduction of the 1988 Tests if GED writing and math instruction do not improve."

High school seniors are better prepared in writing skills than are GED examinees which will negatively influence the pass rate on Test I, if GED examinees do not improve their writing skills. For example, an average multiple-choice item is correctly answered by about 65 percent of seniors and only 60 percent of GED

(continued on page 3)

1986 GED Award Winners

For the second year, the American Council on Education is pleased to recognize outstanding GED graduates through the GED awards program.

We began sending awards plaques to the Administrators early this year. In most jurisdictions, the GED Administrator has arranged a presentation ceremony with government officials and adult educators present.

The award winners, like other GED graduates, took the GED Tests to qualify them for further education, jobs, and for personal satisfaction. We are pleased to recognize their achievements, and to pass along some news about a few of them.

Nancy Watson of Ohio was presented with her award at the Ohio State Board of Education meeting in April. At the Ohio AACE state conference, she was awarded a $250 scholarship. Nancy left high school in Canton, Ohio, during her senior year. Twenty-five years later, when she was 42, she got her GED. Nancy says she may get an accounting degree.

(continued on page 6)

Inside *Items*

4 pages of Teaching Tips
Highlights of Annual GED Conference
Publicity Campaigns for GED
Economic Benefits of Earning a GED
1986 GED Awards
and more

GED Success Stories

[In this double issue, we are proud to present two stories about people who "beat the odds" to become GED graduates. The following is from Monika Sullivan's testimony before the Congressional Committee on the Reauthorization of the Adult Education Act in 1985. Monika is now on the GED National Advisory Committee.]

My name is Monika Sullivan. I live in Annandale, in Fairfax County, Virginia. I came to this country in 1959 from West Germany. At that time, I could hardly speak English. I had been taken by the Nazis from Czechoslovakia to Germany when I was twelve years old and in fifth grade, for forced labor on a farm. After World War II was over, I escaped to West Germany where I met my husband who was an American soldier.

When I first arrived in the United States, I worked as a waitress and my husband and I started a family. I became a citizen of the United States in 1964. I followed my husband, who, as part of the military moved every three or four years. We settled in Virginia in 1973. Since then, I have done volunteer work for the fire department and the Fairfax Hospital Thrift Shop.

Last December I wanted to apply for a job as a crossing guard with Fairfax County Public Schools. Because I never had the opportunity to finish school, I would need to get a GED—a high school equivalency diploma. I called Fairfax County's Office of Adult and Community Education and on January 2, 1985, I started school. I attended classes two mornings a week from 9:30 to noon. I had to study reading and writing, math, science, and social studies. I didn't know anything besides a little math. Science naturally was the hardest. With the help of my teacher and the push and encouragement from everyone else in the Adult Education Office I made fast progress. The teacher took so much time with each student. There were volunteer tutors to help in class, when I had questions. You sure need them. I was in a hurry, so my teacher gave me homework. A lot of homework. When I had trouble, I could even call my teacher at home. I never could have succeeded without the help of my family and the encouragement from the school.

This past June I took the GED (General Educational Development) Tests and passed. I didn't believe that I was going to pass, but everyone else told me that I would. When I opened that letter with the diploma, I jumped in the air 10 meters. I was so happy. I called Captain Clark—she was so proud of me. Then I got the job. I can see now why I needed this education for more than just the job. It helped me in writing to people and in talking. I feel more confident in conversations.

I am surprised that so many American people did not finish high school. I've been telling everyone to go back to school no matter what age.

I hope that you will continue the Adult Basic Education Program. It is very important for everyone. The class serves people who are younger than I am, too—and people from many different backgrounds. An Iranian girl, who has a diploma, needed to study English to get into a nursing program. One of the other girls in the learning center is going to try for a diploma now that she sees that I did it. I have given her some confidence.

Only in this country do you get such an opportunity in the first place. When I told my friends in Germany and Czechoslovakia about Adult Education, they couldn't believe that at my age the schools would still accept me in a free program.

Please continue to support Adult Basic Education for all people in America who need education.

Thank you for letting me come here today, to tell you about my experience in this program in Fairfax County. I am very proud to be here.

Native American Indian, 76, Gets Diploma

Now He Wants to Go to Law School

By Jym Tittle

"A man needs a dream. An impossible dream, as a goal to self satisfaction," Ray Crazywolf, a full- blooded Ute Indian, said of his GED Certificate. He is 76 years old.

Crazywolf, who was born on the Uintah Reservation in Utah, never learned to read and write and has been taking adult education classes at Brady High School.

"I was in school on the reservation and the teacher didn't want me to be left-handed, which I was. She beat me across the hands too many times and I attacked back. The priest said I was a devil child. I left school and never went back," this GED graduate said.

Born Jan. 14, 1911, Crazywolf left the reservation in 1950 to work in Louisiana. He said he and his father hunted bear and caribou in Utah. "We liked to eat bear meat. It is good," he said.

Despite not being able to read or write, he has held numerous responsible jobs, working for the Dow Chemical Company for many years. How did he get by? "They taught me the symbols and diagrams on plans and I went from there."

Mrs. Ray Johnson, counselor at Brady High School, said that Crazywolf made excellent grades on his GED Tests. She complimented him on his grades and was surprised at his abilities.

However, Crazywolf won't brag about himself "because Indians don't do that."

"My dream now is to attend law school," Crazywolf said. "They tell me I would have to have some college before law school, but I am going to get around that. I want to help my people. I don't like the Bureau of Indian Affairs and I want to get into law to fight them. When I was young and stupid I tried to take them on, but that didn't work so I will try this," he said.

"I have been three-quarters of the way around the world and I can't live on the reservation now. There's not much to hunt or anything to do. I don't like cities very much. Brady is pretty good because there aren't too many people. I like the country. I can be at peace with myself there."

Crazywolf sat quietly for a moment with his clear brown eyes seeing into the past.

"Buffalo grass was growing four or five feet deep into the earth. Man plowed it up and destroyed the earth. They changed the mountains and the dust came. We used to stand where we lived and picked the food we ate. Man, who has been a slave over the years, became an economic slave. They ruined the earth and he was forced to work," he explained.

"All that keeps life interesting is trying to reach that impossible goal."

"The earth is my mother, the sun is my father. I must go ahead. To stop now would be foolish. I have the need to go on," he said.

Brady *Herald*, Brady, Texas, April 28, 1987.

GED on TV

In case you haven't seen a copy yet, the newsletter of this name (published by Kentucky Educational Television) is a lively and sprightly compilation of information about local and national GED programs as well as the use of television to deliver adult education instruction. From the most recent issue (volume 7), for example, we learned that Peter Jennings (the anchor person for ABC TV's World News Tonight) dropped out of school and later earned his GED. So did the popular romance novelist Jennifer Blake (who has written novels at various times under the pseudonyms of Patricia Ponder, Maxine Patrick, and Elizabeth Trehearne—but not yet as the Pointer Sisters!).

Readers interested in receiving the *GED on TV* newsletter should write KET Enterprise, Suite 213, 2230 Richmond Road, Lexington, KY 40502.

Plus, in the continuing battle to persuade legislators and school boards that ABE and GED programs are cost-effective, the KET newsletter reports these facts:

- In Louisiana, the cost per hour of instruction in adult education was $1.89 and the average annual cost per enrollee was $145.81 during 1984-85.

- Operating with less than 1% of Alaska's Department of Education FY 1985 budget, Adult Basic Education (GED) awarded 29% of all high school diplomas in the state. Of these people, 889 obtained jobs. If each earned $15,000 per year, more than $13 million of taxable income was generated in the first year after earning the diploma. In addition, 613 got better jobs. If each made just 50 cents more per hour, $637,520 of new taxable income was generated in FY 1986 alone.

A caution: As pleasing as such information is to read (and we love it, quite frankly), we should remember that the single most persuasive reason for investing public and private funds in literacy, adult basic education, and GED programs is that they are *necessary* in order for us to reach the democratic ideal of an informed and educated citizenry.

ged

Fall 1987 GED Item Tryout Schedule

The following states and Canadian provinces will participate in the Fall '87 Tryout. We thank everyone involved for their time and effort.

New Hampshire
Connecticut
Maryland
Georgia
Ohio
Kentucky
Louisiana
South Dakota
Kansas
Montana
Utah
California
Alberta
British Columbia
Manitoba
New Brunswick
Newfoundland
Northwest Territory
Nova Scotia
Prince Edward Island
Saskatchewan

GED Examinees vs. High School Seniors: First Results

(continued from page 1)

examinees; the average essay score for seniors is 6.5 compared to 5.4 for examinees.

However, the most challenging, Wayne cautioned, is math. On the average, 60 percent of seniors can correctly answer math questions compared to only 50 percent of GED examinees. GED examinees earn lower scores in every area of the GED Mathematics Test than do high school seniors; the weakest areas are algebra and data analysis (data analysis includes such math problems as calculating averages, simple probability, and interpreting graphs and tables).

The good news—and there is some!—is that GED graduates do at least as well in the Science and Social Studies GED Tests and even better on the GED Interpreting Literature and the Arts Test than high school seniors.

In concluding this first announcement on the 1988 GED Tests results, Wayne observed that our primary interest in gathering such information is to help examinees meet their goal of obtaining a GED. These comparisons of examinee and senior performance should help us set priorities for GED student preparation programs.

Additional information on high school seniors and examinee performance on the 1988 GED Tests Tests will be released in this newsletter as it's made available.

Pennsylvania Study: GED Impact

A recent study by Ken Miller surveyed a sample of 612 persons who earned their GED diplomas in Pennsylvania during 1983. A brief summary of the results is available from GEDTS—ask for Research Brief No. 14.

According to *What's the Buzz?* (Pennsylvania's adult education newsletter), some of the highlights were: Of these GED graduates:

- Nearly 70% reported an increase in self-esteem as a result of earning a GED diploma
- More than 85% told their relatives of their accomplishment
- Thirty percent said they had assumed more responsibility within the family
- Sixteen percent reported that their achievement inspired their children to remain in school
- More women graduates reported changes in self-esteem, self-confidence, and inspiring children to remain in school than did men graduates
- Of those who were unemployed but seeking employment at the time of GED testing, about 45% had become employed by the time of the following survey was taken
- Twenty three percent had qualified for college admission, and 44% had already attended some type of education or training

There are many other interesting results in Ken's dissertation. Copies of the dissertation can be obtained through the Dissertation Abstract Service.

Coming in the November Issue . . .

Creating an effective marketing plan for your program requires an understanding of a few basic marketing principles. In the next issue of GED ITEMS, Victoria Falco, director of marketing and outreach activities for The Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials, will outline seven common-sense rules that will help you to launch efficient and effective marketing plans.

16th Annual GED Administrators Conference

During the week of July 20th-24th, a record number of GED Administrators, State Directors of Adult Education, and guests met in Seattle, Washington to learn more about the 1988 GED Tests and to discuss essay scoring, special editions of the GED Tests, staff development, program management and a host of other issues and policies related to the changeover to the revised Tests. The first conference theme was set by speakers Verne Duncan, Oregon Superintendent of Public Instruction and President-elect of the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Hank Spille, Director of the Center for Adult Learners at the American Council on Education. Addressing the theme, "All One System," Verne observed that increasing numbers of people are now served by our educational system who weren't in the past. Among them, he cited the disabled, the mentally retarded, migrants, and most recently, senior citizens. Hank, addressing this theme from another angle, spoke of the tremendous benefits of cooperation between business and higher education. Increasingly, we are seeing that education is enriched by cooperation and inclusion, and only diluted by isolation as a separate system. Both speakers emphasized the need for adult educators to work closely with their colleagues in other learning settings.

Doug Whitney, Director of the GED Testing Service, introduced the next theme that characterized the rest of the conference. "Celebrating the Process" seemed most apt for a week that dealt with the process of preparing ourselves and our students for the revised GED Tests. Doug said that the number of GED graduates tested increased for the second straight year and, more importantly, the number of those receiving GED credentials. Specifically, he singled out the following states for their noteworthy increases: Ohio (16%), Minnesota (17%), New Mexico (17%), Mississippi (19%), Maine (23%), Utah (25%), and Kentucky (28%). In Canada, the provinces of New Brunswick and British Columbia had increases of 45% and 18% respectively.

Another encouraging sign came from the 1985 Department of Labor study by David Passmore which found, among other things, that compared to non-graduates, young GED recipients are more likely to be employed and earn an average of $780 more a year. This may seem insignificant, Doug noted, until you calculate that over the expected work life of a young GED graduate, this will mean $34,000. (See page 14.)

Striking a similar note, Doug cautioned that our research should take care to focus on benefits associated with GED graduation. That is to say, we know that it is preferable for young persons who can do so to graduate from high school, and that young high school graduates will persist at higher rates in college and military settings. These comparisons are fruitless, however, because our students will not return to high school. The point is , we need to compare our GED graduates to those who have no high school credential in order to identify the comparative benefits of the GED for the individuals themselves and for society.

During policy discussions, a clear majority of the Administrators recommended that participating states and provinces take steps to create more consistency in the titles given to the credentials and to the minimum scores required to earn them. High school equivalency diploma and high school equivalency certificate were the two most commonly recommended titles. At present, there are at least 18 different titles in use. (Doug Whitney, GEDTS)

Chiding the U.S. Administrators for their lack of knowledge of Canadian geography, Turney Manzer (Nova Scotia GED Administrator) asked his colleagues to identify how many provinces participated in the GED program and name the nearest province to Minot, North Dakota. Do you know?!

Work began on the development of a set of guidelines for administering the GED Tests to persons with disabilities and other special needs. The goal is to provide clearer guidance for Examiners and to encourage the appropriate use of special test editions and adaptations. (Jean Lowe, GEDTS)

Highlights of the 16th Annual GED Conference

On September 13, ABC television stations will carry a made-for-TV movie entitled "Bluffing It." The movie, starring Dennis Weaver, tells the story of a plant foreman whose inability to read becomes a problem when he is promoted. You may be able to work this into your local advertising. (James Duffy, Cap Cities/ABC)

In Kentucky, a non-profit foundation (the G.E.D. Foundation for Adult Education) has been established to assist the state department in increasing participation in adult education. The state has set a goal of 8,700 (nearly 50%) more GED graduates in 1987 than in 1986. (Libby Walthall, GED Foundation)

Beginning next year, inmates at federal prisons who did not graduate from high school will have to earn their GED diplomas in order to qualify for better jobs and pay. (Sylvia McCullum, Bureau of Federal Prisons)

The National Council of State Directors of Adult Education voted to take the first steps toward forming a consortium. The consortium would provide the Directors with a permanent staff whose task would include planning and conducting professional development activities for the Directors. (Garrett Murphy, New York State Director)

Students who entered the University of Arizona with high school diplomas earned an average cumulative grade point of 2.80 after their first semester. Students who entered with a GED diploma earned a cumulative g.p.a. of 2.63. (Gary Eyre, Arizona GED Administrator)

Specifications for the revised Spanish tests, suggestions for outreach, and a list of available instructional materials were distributed. (Susan Robinson, GEDTS)

Between 25 and 30 percent of the students enrolled in Alabama's postsecondary institutions are GED graduates. (Bobby Dees, Alabama GED Administrator)

1986 GED Award Winners

(continued from page 1)

Pamela Larson, age 30, of Minnesota received her award from the state Education Commissioner. She decided to get her GED when she was turned down for a promotion at work. Now she plans to enroll in a computer science program.

Pamela Larson receives GED Award from Governor Rudy Perpich of Minnesota.

GMGSA John Herr, age 24, took the GED Tests at Great Lakes Naval Training Center. He had been out of high school for five years, traveling throughout the U.S. and working, before he enlisted in the Navy in 1986. He intends to study for a degree in literature or history and to teach at a small college.

The award winners are from 18 to 48 years of age. Their average total standard score on the GED Tests was 364.

We wish all the GED award winners much success!

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1986 GED Award Winners

Jurisdiction	Award Recipient*	No. Tested in 1986
Alabama	John D. Arrington	11,335
Alaska	Bradley D. Jennings	2,204
Arizona	Ronald W. Seehoffer	10,934
**Arkansas	Howard L. Johnson	10,191
	Edward C. Tyler	
California	Randall K. Lamb	48,148
Colorado	Betty J. Dean	10,083
Connecticut	Robert W. Colin	6,882
Delaware	John O. Lamb	1,009
District of Columbia	Sharon U. Jones	1,616
Florida	John E. Price	41,100
Georgia	Eun Jae Lee	17,432
Hawaii	Roseann Dati	2,788
Idaho	Rebecca Holdeman	3,404
Illinois	Benita M. Knopf	29,971
Indiana	Brian R. Israel	11,319
Iowa	Gail L. Arndt	7,832
Kansas	Bruce W. Petrik	8,442
Kentucky	Jacqueline C. Price	18,595
Maine	Daniel W. Gerrish	3,261
Maryland	Charles T. Elliott II	12,304
Massachusetts	Henry H. Kunhardt	14,078
Michigan	David A. Crawford	27,604
Micronesia	Harold T. Goodwill	185
Minnesota	Pamela J. Larson	8,066
Mississippi	Thomas J. Whetstone	11,616
Missouri	Sherrie L. Thomas	10,921
Montana	Edward J. Oedewaldt	2,462
Nebraska	Gordon D. Adkins	4,919
Nevada	James H. Short	3,018
New Hampshire	Andrew H. Ware	2,257
New Jersey	Linda L. Lindsey	17,170
New Mexico	Judith A. Hageman	6,445
New York	Daniel M. Solovay	88,040
North Carolina	Raymond F. Eger	17,762
North Dakota	Vincent R. Nogowski III	1,622
Ohio	Nancy Watson	15,869
Oklahoma	Doris C. Horning	8,777
Oregon	Christine L. Selvey	10,559
Pennsylvania	Gayle E. Lawrence	26,909
Rhode Island	Thomas R. Hutton	3,726
South Carolina	Matthew T. Schrock	8,794
Tennessee	Rebecca L. McCroskey	16,027
Texas	Aida A. Montanaro	59,045
Utah	Bill J. Murray	4,316
Vermont	Beverley R. Edie	1,618
Virginia	Harry F. Hess	15,122
Virgin Islands	Rita J. Bostwick	199
**Washington	Michael P. Chaffey	13,883
	Patrick M. Waples	
West Virginia	Debra K. Gilbert	6,531
Wisconsin	Lorelei L. Kring	14,157
Wyoming	David M. Courtney	1,894
Department of Defense		11,610
U. S. Air Force	Airman David B. Reynolds	
U. S. Army	PFC Michael S. Clark	
U. S. Army National Guard	SGT Tracy E. Dacar	
U. S. Coast Guard	AT2 William E. Krimmel III	
U. S. Marine Corps	LCpl David W. Brown	
U. S. Navy	GMGSA John D. Herr	
Federal Bureau of Prisons	Jairo E. Rodriguez	3,761
Canada		
British Columbia	Laurie N. Brocke	3,898
Manitoba	Andrew D. Smith	1,663
New Brunswick	Gerald J. Goguen	2,438
Newfoundland	Terrance S. Ratcliffe	606
Northwest Territories	Alexander Arnett	110
Nova Scotia	Rosemary J. Guest	2,391
Prince Edward Island	Peter L. Praught	193
Saskatchewan	Bruce B. Wilde	2,538

*Names received by GEDTS as of August 10, 1987.
**Arkansas and Washington had two winners each with the same standard scores.

The following four pages of Teaching Tips are designed as a set for easy removal and duplication.

Writing Across the Curriculum in Adult Basic Education

by Donna Gorrell

One way for adult education programs to teach writing is to draw upon the current interest in **writing across the curriculum (WAC)**. In many ABE programs, a single teacher provides instruction covering the entire range of basic education: reading, math, social studies—everything, and crossovers are natural.

The foundation of all WAC programs is the premise that writing is done to learn as well as to communicate. A corollary is just as essential: by writing to learn, students learn to write.

Most school writing is *transactional*, by which the students show the teacher what they know. But a more important kind of writing is the *expressive*. This is **exploratory writing**, begun without a plan or even a purpose, just an idea that the writer discovers in the act of writing.

Teachers can encourage exploratory writing by assigning free writing—a five or ten minute period in which students are asked to write without stopping, without making corrections, without planning. The writing can be genuinely productive if the teacher assigns a definite subject—for example, the topic just discussed or a question derived from assigned reading. As part of a science lesson, for example, students might be told, "Write for ten minutes to explain how the tilt of the earth's axis affects the earth's weather." Other reasons for using free writing:

1. to start discussion;
2. to focus attention;
3. to summarize lessons;
4. to re-orient lost classes;
5. to respond to readings;
6. to generate paper topics; and
7. to monitor class progress.

Free writing thus can come at the beginning of the class, at the end, or somewhere in between. Students should also free write at home.

Disabled writers like those in adult basic education classes need opportunities and encouragement to write—often and freely. By doing so, they become more familiar with writing as a medium of communication. They also discover that it's not such an intimidating process and that it truly is a way of exploring and discovering ideas. Moreover, they learn more about whatever topic they are writing on: if they're describing the effects of the tilt of the earth's axis on weather, by writing it out on paper they are analyzing, synthesizing, inferring—in other words engaging in thinking skills of a higher order than simple recall.

The journal works best of course if the teacher keeps one, too. In this way writing becomes a communal activity, something that people do, not just something the teacher tells the students to do. It can be especially helpful for the adult basic education teacher to write along with students. That is, while the students are writing about the tilt of the earth's axis, the teacher writes, too—and in the discussion following the writing shares his or her writing with the students. ABE teachers are generally not experienced writers, and what they learn from writing can made them better writers as well as better-informed teachers.

Free writing is important to the writing process, but not *all* important. Students need also to learn form, structure, ways of organizing ideas. Formal writing can be done with a cross-curricular approach, too. Students are assigned real subjects, based on their subject-matter studies. For example, they might be asked to "list and explain three causes of the Civil War" following a reading and discussion of that conflict. This kind of writing calls for a structured approach, starting with an outline, and the outline itself might be the idea generator.

Teachers could assign topics such as these:

1. Describe the process of photosynthesis.
2. Explain how the theory of supply and demand works in an economy.
3. Explain and give examples of faulty pronoun reference.
4. Describe the way you work out word problems in math.
5. What are three ways for discovering word meanings? List them and illustrate how you would apply them to the word "liquefy."

Writing across the curriculum programs characteristically take a process approach. That is, rather than assigning a writing and then taking up the final drafts to read and grade, a teacher might intervene at any stage in the process. First, the teacher is involved in idea exploration, assisting students in ways of discovering and uncovering ideas, engaging in a dialectic that opens up the student's mind to new ways of looking at ordinary things. And the teacher helps the student to find new information that is needed for filling out ideas, working alongside as ideas begin to fill pages. He or she looks at rough drafts and assists the student throughout the process of revision, thereby teaching what revision is. And the teacher teaches editing skills. By the time the teacher receives the final draft, he or she has done a lot of teaching about writing.

Intervention in the writing process also takes the form of collaborative learning. Teachers can set up peer workshops in which groups of two, three, or four students read and respond to one another's writing. Research and practical experience have shown that even low-level writers can become effective critics if they have appropriate guidance. They must learn to concentrate first on content, then on form.

Listening to a paper being read ALOUD, they learn to respond positively and personally wherever possible. They look for purpose, audience, organization, and evidence. They should be able to summarize the main point. They might have guidelines such as these:

1. In a sentence, summarize the writer's main idea.
2. Name two things you liked about this piece of writing.
3. Were there any places where you wondered where the writer was going with the subject?
4. Were there any places where you would have liked an example or more explanation?
5. Did you like the beginning? How could it be improved?
6. Did the conclusion seem like a good finish?
7. Is the vocabulary appropriate? Are there any words you didn't understand? Any that are too much like slang?

These are sample guidelines that could change from time to time as the assignments change. The advantage of teaching students to be good critics is that they also become better writers. They know what their audience is looking for, and, perhaps most important, they *have* an audience—real people, friends whose opinions they value.

Professor Gorrell is an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

Teaching Tips for the Revised GED Tests

The following teaching tips are excerpted from the Official GED Teacher's Guide, published by Contemporary Books, Inc. For further information on ordering the Guide, see p. 11, col.2.

Test One: Writing Skills

The inclusion of an essay section on the Writing Skills Test underscores the importance of teaching students to produce written communication. The following is a summary of the Guide's suggestions for teaching writing.

1. **Take time to relieve students' anxieties about writing.** Many writing teachers have observed students' natural reluctance to write. The teacher's challenge is to overcome that reluctance by providing students with frequent opportunities to write about subjects in which students have a real interest. Ungraded freewriting and journals may be appropriate "loosening up" exercises in this case. A five-to-ten-minute freewriting period can be offered at the beginning of every class or writing session. This gives students an opportunity to begin writing thoughts and words without concern for "correctness" and thus makes the prospect of beginning a structured writing assignment less intimidating.

2. **Stress that writing is a process and that revision is an inherent part of this process.** This is a point that bears repeating to students, who often feel blocked from writing because they view it as a complete and perfect product.

3. **Give frequent and varied writing assignments.** Most writing teachers agree that students learn to write best when they write regularly. Writing assignments may vary in length and complexity; certainly it isn't necessary to require an essay in every assignment. Rather, teachers should try to transform many assignments into writing exercises of some sort, whether they involve writing lists, sentences, paragraphs, or longer pieces. The point is to help students grow familiar with the process of putting ideas into written form.

4. **Design writing assignments so that they relate to students' interests.** The best topics for writing are those that engage the students' interest and allow them to demonstrate their strengths as thinkers and writers. Though they require more effort from instructors, topics developed in consultation with individual students are often the best, especially if the topics demonstrate to the students how writing is useful in their lives.

5. **Set reasonable objectives and use an incremental approach to building skills.** Adult learners frequently feel insecure in the area of writing. And beginning writers typically make many errors—from confused organization to sentence or word-level errors—so it would be easy to overwhelm them with lists of errors to correct. Start focusing on one problem area at a time—e.g., staying on topic or using complete sentences.

6. **Use the students' writing to teach specific skills.** See the article on p. 8 for ideas on writing across the curriculum.

7. **Have students correct their own writing.** Teachers should use the students' writing as source material for teaching skills from organization to sentence structure, but let the students do the correcting. When an instructor indicates in bright red ink how a detail should be made more specific or how a sentence fragment should be corrected, even if students are required to rewrite, all they learn is how to copy.

8. **Choose or create drill materials that call upon students to use their own ideas and language.**

9. **Emphasize that the evaluation is another part of the total writing process.** See The Official GED Teacher's Guide for a discussion of incremental and peer evaluation approaches to evaluating writing.

10. **Prepare students for both parts of the Writing Skills Test.** Because the multiple-choice section of the Writing Skills Test presents students with materials and language not their own and with some language issues they've not dealt with in their own writing, some care should be taken to acclimate students to this section. There are a number of effective methods teachers can use to do this. (Again, see The Official GED Teachers Guide.)

11. **Prepare students to write in a test situation.** While we understand the value of a process approach toward the teaching of writing, for success on the essay portion of the Writing Skills Test students must ultimately write on an assigned topic, under timed conditions, without assistance, and without the use of reference materials. As a last step before the test, it is important that students preparing to take the test become comfortable writing under similar conditions.

Test Two: Social Studies

For adult learners, the social studies are perhaps the most familiar and least threatening of the subjects included in the GED Tests. Adults comes into contact with social studies issues daily by watching the news on television, reading newspapers and periodicals, or listening to the radio. Teachers are in a position to capitalize on students' familiarity with current events by reminding students that they have opinions on these issues, whether they concern the economy (taxes, wages, prices, foreign competition, and jobs) or politics (local, state, or national).

Most adults have a favorite topic in history, and the teacher can reinforce that enthusiasm and urge students to investigate the subject more deeply. Every adult has experienced personal growth and conflict, has values and beliefs, and enjoys personal relationships. This is also the stuff of social studies, and sensitive and sensible examination of these topics through reading, discussion, and writing can make for interesting learning and greater self-awareness. Many adults travel to work, and all are affected by the climate; these are jumping-off points for investigating geography. In short, the social studies comprise an integral part of every adult's daily life, and there are many avenues, materials,

and methods from which a teacher can choose to teach or reinforce important skills and concepts. The following are a few suggestions.

1. **Familiarize students with key interdisciplinary concepts.** Certain concepts are key to an understanding of social studies, and many of these concepts involve an integration of the various content areas of history, geography, economics, political science, and the behavioral sciences. These are some examples of the integration of these concepts:
   - Economic growth or recession is influenced by the availability of human and natural resources as well as by social and political priorities (economics, geography, and political science).
   - Social values change over time and these changes are often reflected in the interpretation or creation of laws (behavioral sciences, history, and political science).
   - Individual rights and freedoms may be in conflict with issues concerning the general welfare; laws are made to regulate these conflicts (behavioral sciences, history, and political science).
   - The needs and priorities of society have an effect on the use and development of the natural environment (economics and geography).

2. **Have students practice using information from various sources to answer questions and solve problems.** It is important for students to identify main ideas in reading selections and to extract information from graphic materials, to write summaries, and to identify supporting arguments.

3. **Make students aware of the terminology of critical thinking.** Some of the most basic tools of critical thinking are the terms used to describe the processes. Students should become familiar with the terms, as a way of labeling the processes they use. These include main idea, illustration, summary, implication, inference, concept, fact, hypothesis, opinion, belief, bias, assumption, conclusion, supporting statement, cause, effect, values, documentation, logical fallacies, and generalization.

4. **Familiarize students with the process of social studies investigation,** including the following steps of:
   - stating the problem,
   - formulating a hypothesis,
   - collecting data,
   - analyzing data, and
   - drawing a conclusion.

Test Three: Science

Most of the recommendations for teaching social studies also apply to the teaching of science. And, as in teaching the social studies, an effective method for teaching science is to require students to examine information critically, not simply to translate it or comprehend it on a literal level. This can be accomplished by asking them to question the information they read, by isolating causes and effects, or by evaluating any conclusions that are suggested.

1. **Foster the development of critical thinking by planning the structure of class discussions.** An effective strategy is to begin a class discussion by introducing a problem or by asking an open-ended question on a topic that is familiar to the students.

2. **Structure both oral and written questions to require students to use higher-order skills.** However, to design **all questions** in this way is to risk leaving some students behind. Begin with skills lower on the cognitive hierarchy and then build from that point. For example, the "who," "what," "when," and "where" type of questions address prior knowledge, recall, and, to some extent, comprehension. Questions that call for the use of information at higher cognitive levels include "how," "why," and "what if."

3. **Have students construct their own graphs.** Various graphics are presented on the Science Test, and students often find these difficult. One type of graphic with which students seem to have trouble is the simple line graph. One approach to teaching interpretation of the graph is to assign students the task of **constructing** graphs of their own. Their graphs can portray any number of relationships drawn from everyday experiences. For example, parents can plot the number of hours in a week that a child watches TV, students can plot the number of television viewing hours by day of the week, the number of hours spent studying by day of the week, certain expenses (heat or electricity, entertainment, transportation, gasoline, etc.) by week or month, etc.

4. **Encourage general interest in science.** While out-of-class assignments and class trips are generally impractical in adult education classes, students can be encouraged to view some of the many science programs on television, clip articles of interest from newspapers or magazines, or prepare a written summary of an article or program. Likewise, teachers can encourage students to make the trip on their own and to prepare a brief written summary of one aspect of the visit.

5. **Use student interest in everyday topics to get them working with diagrams.** Since diagrams and schematics may serve as sample GED items or as part of a stimulus, students can become familiar with reading diagrams in areas with which they are already familiar. Teachers can bring in diagrams concerning car repair, VCR hookup, or microwave oven operation to help students with issues ranging from the most literal interpretation to more complicated questions.

6. **Familiarize students with the scientific method.** Understanding the scientific method is key to many of the questions on the GED Tests. Students should be familiar with the following concepts: experiment, observation, hypothesis, conclusion, finding, and proof, and with the steps in the scientific method.
   1. Make an observation.
   2. State the problem in the form of a question.
   3. Formulate a hypothesis that would explain the facts or events.
   4. Design an experiment to test the hypothesis.
   5. Draw conclusions based on the experiment.

Test Four: Interpreting Literature and the Arts

As with any area of learning, the key to teaching literature is its demonstrated relevance to the reader. No exercises in literacy analysis could hope to

engage the adult learner like the rush of recognition when a poem is made meaningful or a short story reveals a theme that is close to a reader's heart. This aspect of literature is both a challenge and a benefit in teaching adult learners, who bring more years of experience to their reading than do their younger counterparts.

With this in mind, the following are some suggestions for presenting adult learners with a variety of literary types and for motivating them to read for deeper understanding.

1. **Begin your study of fiction with prose since poetry and drama may intimidate the uninitiated.** These selections should probably be short stories or novel excerpts since time is always a factor for adults. (With encouragement, a student may even read the entire story or book.)

2. **Assign the reading of fiction outside of class and then have a group discussion using study questions.** Such questions might include among others:
   - What is this story about?
   - Who tells the story?
   - What is the mood of the story? How does the writer create it (by word choice, sentence length, etc.)?
   - Where does the story occur? When? How does the reader know?

3. **Teach fiction by examining conflict.** Most conflict in fiction can be broken down to simply:
   - man vs. nature;
   - man vs. man;
   - man vs. God;
   - man vs. society;
   - man vs. himself; or some combination of these.

   With a greater understanding of obstacles, tension, and suspense, the class is ready to focus on the conflict of the story itself.

4. **Tailor these approaches to small group discussions or writing assignments.**

5. **Demystify poetry for your students.** To adults who are reading poetry for the first time, the approach should be simple. Poetry usually does one of three things:
   - conveys a message;
   - tells a story;
   - describes a feeling, person, place, or thing.

   Poetry is also meant to be read aloud, and this should be done at least twice—at the beginning and at the end of study. What the poem will mean at first glance and what it means after close examination may seem completely different.

6. **Select high interest nonfiction for your students.**

7. **Have students take parts and read from drama.** Because the format is so different from prose, drama may at first seem difficult to read or teach. The icebreaker here is to have the students themselves take parts and read scenes or a one-act play together.

8. **Help students realize that they are already familiar with commentary in movie, concert, and book reviews.** Though commentary is the literary type that provokes the most anxiety, reading a movie review is something adults often do. Commentary is thus best regarded in this way: students themselves are not to critique the fine arts, but to read what others have to say about a particular work of literature, film, theater, painting, music, or sculpture.

Test Five: Mathematics

The most important task teachers face as they help their students improve in mathematics is to relieve their anxieties about the subject of math. It is quite common for students at all ages, but particularly adults, to begin with an assumption that they cannot do math. This attitude often represents a powerful block to progress.

1. **Stress the importance of the process of problem solving rather than the calculations involved.** Examinees should be urged to recognize the math skills they already possess, especially their ability to estimate, and these skills should be called upon.

2. **Encourage group problem-solving activities.** Assign a problem or set of problems to a group of three to five students, taking care to assign the more capable student to different groups within the class. Students tend to be more willing to express their difficulties with the problems to each other than to the entire class, and they will readily accept—and truly learn—the ideas their peers suggest.

3. **Provide opportunities for students to "visualize" problems.** Ability at mathematics, of course, relates highly to the ability to perceive spatial relationships, and students will profit from practice at "visualizing" problems.

4. **Stress the relevancy of mathematics to students' daily lives.** Students will profit from seeing that mathematics is a skill that is relevant to their lives. Recipes, home improvement projects, budgets, taxes, salaries, daily expenses, costs of major purchases-all are situations adults face daily, and all involve the basic problem-solving skills require to succeed on the test.

5. **Stress the connections present in mathematics.** Regular reviews of concepts emphasize the continuity of the subject while they help build students' confidence about material they have learned.

6. **Build on students' estimating skills.** Besides encouraging students to estimate answers, teachers should urge students to ask themselves: "Is this answer reasonable? Does it make sense?"

7. **Have students practice separating necessary from extraneous information.** Students should practice selecting only the data they need to answer a question or solve a particular problem and should be encouraged to make a chart to organize information.

8. **Provide situations where not enough information is given to solve a problem.** On the test, students need to determine whether there is not enough information to solve a problem. Teachers can present students with a mixture of problems that have both sufficient and insufficient information, and when a problem seems to have insufficient information, students can be asked to say or to write the information that would be needed to solve it.

9. **Encourage multiple strategies for problem solving.** About one-quarter of the problems on the GED Mathematics Test require students to focus on information needed or a process used to solve a problem. Teachers can introduce a problem, then encourage students to brainstorm and set up possible methods of solution.

Texas Adult Education Survey

Results of a major survey of adult education students and GED candidates in Texas were released earlier this year. Between June 1, 1985, and December 31, 1985, nearly 11,000 people participated in the study. The project was a cooperative research effort of the American Council on Education and the Texas Education Agency, and was funded in part by a grant from the Meadows Foundation in Dallas, Texas.

Some of the major highlights of the survey follow:

- Adult education students and GED candidates are most likely to hold jobs as handlers/equipment cleaners/helpers/laborers or in sales, in service occupations, or as homemakers. Other occupations held include machine operation, administrative and clerical support, and precision production.
- Less than 5% from each group reports not completing high school because of alcohol or drugs. "Pregnancy" is listed by 8-12% of each group as their reason for not completing high school.
- "Recent career changes," such as starting a new job or seeking a new or better job, are triggers for about 2 out of every 3 GED candidates and 1 of 2 adult education students.
- "Recent awareness about adult education and GED programs" is a trigger to begin participating in adult learning programs for both groups.
- Almost 70% of the adult education participants first learn about their program from a friend, neighbor, or a relative.
- To increase participation in adult education programs, students suggest most frequently that more publicity about the programs be provided, especially on TV and radio.
- About 1 in 5 GED candidates, compared to 1 of 9 adult education students, listens to the *radio* over 20 hours per week.
- "More flexible and extensive scheduling" is the most popular suggestion for improvement of services, put forward by half of adult education respondents and 25% of GED candidates.
- Seventy-five percent of all GED candidates, and slightly more adult education students, report that they *read* on a regular basis, with the majority of regular readers stating they read 1-5 hours per week.
- Almost 9 out of 10 adult education students report encouraging other students to stay in school.

Copies of the 29-page summary "*Adult Education in Texas: A Survey of GED Candidates and Hispanic Adult Education Students*" are available from GEDTS for $5 (prepaid). Ask for Report Number 87-4158. Copies of the 170-page final report, including 32 charts, will be available through ERIC in November.

New Official GED Practice Tests

New *Official GED Practice Tests* reflect the changes in the GED Tests for next year. Two U.S. English forms and one Canadian form are already available; audiocassette and large print forms are being completed. One Spanish form will also be available. An expanded *Teacher's Manual* enables teachers to evaluate student writing progress on essay topics comparable to those that will be used on the GED Tests. Scores on all forms have already been equated to those for the new GED Tests. The practice tests and associated materials are distributed for GEDTS by Cambridge, the Adult Education Company, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10106. Telephone: (800)221-4764.

New Teacher's Guide to GED Tests

The Official Teacher's Guide to the GED Tests describes the contents, cognitive skills, and formats used in the revised GED Tests. This new book is the definitive description of the GED Tests and can be used to evaluate instructional materials and to develop effective curricula. The *Guide* contains teaching tips and sample objectives covered in the revised tests. The *Guide* is distributed for GEDTS by Contemporary Books, Inc., 180 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601. Telephone: (312)782-9181.

Retesting policy change

Discussions during the annual GED Administrators Conference in July 1986 revealed strong support for a change in the ACE retesting policy to permit GED graduates to retest in order to earn higher scores in two circumstances. During the past year, the ACE Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials and the GED Advisory Committee have approved the change—which is now in effect.

The policy change permits GED graduates to retest to earn higher scores where such scores are required by a prospective employer or educational institution.

The new policy does *not* permit the testing of high school graduates nor graduates of other adult diploma programs. Nor are GED graduates permitted to retest for any reason other than admissions or employment.

The new policy extends a permission that has been available in Canada for about two years. The Canadians' experience suggests that only those GED graduates who are required to do so will seek to retest; none seem interested in retesting just for fun!

The new policy will make it possible for GED graduates to qualify for admissions to those colleges that require higher GED scores than the state or province does for issuing a credential. Similarly, GED graduates will be able to qualify for employment in firms that set minimum GED scores for employment rather than, as ACE recommends, accepting the credential.

Most jurisdictions will administer the new policy in the following ways:

- GED graduates can only be retested once.
- Requests for retesting must be submitted in writing.
- Requests must be accompanied by a written or published confirmation that the employer or education agency requires higher scores as a condition for employment or admission.
- In most states and provinces, there will be a fee for this retesting.
- States and provinces may attach additional limitations to these retesting opportunities.

Contact your GED Administrator or GED Examiner to clarify any questions about the way this new policy will be administered in your jurisdiction.

News and Notes

In Cleveland, Ohio at Max S. Hayes Evening School, a milestone was reached when the 10,000th person was given the GED Tests on February 4, 1987.

"The success of our programs over the years has always been due to our desires to meet the needs of the people," says George Taylor, GED examiner at the evening school. He added: "I've always tried to emphasize personal confidence as the number one ingredient of successful testing. If you can make the people feel comfortable, ease the tension, and assure them that they really do have a chance of passing, they will do their best and that's half the battle."

Records indicate that approximately 8,000 of the examinees achieved their high school certificate (diploma) from the State of Ohio.

Mr. Taylor reflected on a few of the special cases he could remember: all the elevator operators who lost their jobs when elevators were automated needed the test to get Civil Service protection, a nursing home director who needed the certification to maintain a license to run a home she had owned and operated for over twenty years, and a professional football player who needed the certificate to enter college. These are but a few of the special cases.

"Every person's reason for dropping out of high school is a story of some kind of personal, private tragedy and everyone is important and deserves a second chance. That second chance is this GED certificate and I believe it will take much less time for the center to test the next 10,000."

In the state of Nebraska, plans are under way for a series of seminars devoted to teaching writing for the new GED Test. These will be arranged locally at ten to fifteen sites across the state. These sessions will probably be about three hours in length and will be held either on weekday evenings or Saturday morning. Call your local or state adult education director for details.

Betty Mills, Testing Services Coordinator at Mesa Community College, Mesa, Arizona writes: "I was agreeably surprised and moved while interviewing an applicant for the GED Testing. Mrs. Lola Back is 70 years young and when I asked her why she needed her high school equivalency now, this was her reply, 'There are a bunch of kids in my neighborhood who have left school and are just bummin' the street, and I have a bet with them that if an old lady like me with a 5th grade education can study and get my GED, then so can they.'

It seems the bet calls for those under 16 to return to school and those older to get their GED.

She is very determined and feels that with the GED certificate she can help these dropouts, older persons needing to learn to read, and herself."

A University for Adults

About half of the people who take the GED Tests each year indicate that they hope, someday, to attend college or postsecondary training. Each year, in fact, about 120,000 GED graduates enroll in U.S. colleges and universities. But, not all colleges offer effective programs for adults—programs that accommodate the needs and life circumstances of older students.

One that does, however, is the City University of New York (CUNY). We recently browsed through a copy of their impressive booklet entitled: For the chance of a lifetime: Opportunities for adults. The number and variety of adult-oriented postsecondary programs available on CUNY's 18 campuses is truly astounding. We counted 16 distinctive programs. If adult New Yorkers can't find a program to suit, they're not looking!

As you might expect, a college that creates so many postsecondary programs for adults doesn't overlook those who are not yet high school graduates. "The University's commitment to helping New Yorkers improve their lives through education extends to those who do not yet meet the entrance requirements," says the book. Then it lists the nine campuses that offer GED classes in addition to their postsecondary programs; eight are tuition-free. Twelve offer free ABE classes.

If you'd like to see how a college or university goes about creating suitable programs for adults or get ideas for programs at your school, write for a free copy of the 26-page book to: Patricia G. Reilly, Director of Community and Corporate Relations, Office of Admission Services, CUNY, 101 West 31st Street, New York, NY 10001.

A toll-free telephone number has been installed in Ohio for calls to Richard Armanini's office (state GED Administrator). The number is 1 (800) 334-6679. This number can be used only from within Ohio.

The Joys of Our Profession

by Robert W. Hauer

In early July I was walking in front of HQ 8th Army, when I saw a familiar face from days gone-by of a previous Korean tour. That soldier was CW2 (P) Frank Villagomez.

I first met Mr. Villagomez in 1976 when I was a GS-7 intern at Camp Carroll, Korea. At the time, Frank was a E-5 Sergeant who could not get promoted to E-6 Staff Sergeant because he lacked a high school diploma. At Camp Carroll I worked closely with Frank. However, we both left at about the same time, and he had not yet passed the GED Tests when I last saw him. I often wondered about him over the years as he was one of my first clients.

The rest of the story goes like this. Mr. Villagomez successfully passed the GED in 1977 at Fort Hood, Texas. Shortly thereafter, he retested on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and raised his GT score from 79 to 123. He was quickly promoted to staff sergeant, and selected for promotion to E-7. In 1979, while he was on the E-7 promotion list he was commissioned a warrant officer. Since then he has started work on his Associate Degree with Central Texas College.

Mr. Villagomez is but one of literally thousands of examples of how we as military educators have helped people change their life for the better. Undoubtedly, each ESO and counselor can cite similar stories. Each time I see the smile on a person's face when I tell them they passed the GED Tests; scored well on a CLEP or DSST; or when they learn about the credit for military experience; enroll for the last course of an Associate or Bachelors Degree Program, etc., I realize again and again we do make a difference. Every time a soldier, sailor, airman, or marine that we serve "reaches for excellence" and succeeds—so have we!

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Ask the Experts . . . That's You!

More on ESL Students in Transition

Jane E. Haasch of the Fox Valley Technical Institute in Appleton, Wisconsin, says that their GOAL (Goal Oriented Adult Learning) Program correlates ESL instruction with GED preparation and/or vocational and technical training. They use math curriculum materials designed especially for beginning ESL learners. When students have successfully mastered these materials or can demonstrate a reading level of 4.0, they advance into the GOAL Program. ESL learners next proceed through books 5-8 of the Scott Foresman Math series and then into Springboard for Passing the GED Mathematics Test. Jane reports that using a spiral curriculum with vocabulary gradually building up from level 5.0 to 8.0 enables ESL students to move into GED level materials quite comfortably.

Other suggestions that we received for helping ESL/GED students make the transition from ESL to GED preparation addressed the Social Studies Test. Some teachers pointed out, for example, that instruction is needed in interpreting political cartoons which are very culture-bound. Some interesting and incomplete impressions of contemporary life come from TV, such as the phrase used by a suspect on a crime show, "taking the fifth," for example. This is the kind of concept that may need to be taught explicitly to someone from another culture.

In preparing ESL students for the GED Tests, please remember that Spanish speaking students can take the GED Tests (including the Essay) in Spanish. Some states require a sixth test of English proficiency for the issuance of a credential. Check with your GED Administrator.

Next Month's question: Using Advisory Committees Effectively. Please share your experiences with others who are facing this issue.

Note: We owe Ted Sofios of Alameda, California, an apology for misspelling his name in last month's column. (No kidding, Ted, it was spelled correctly on our disk. It must have been the printer's elves!) Ted also wanted to emphasize that the test taking tips and exercise that he found helpful were in Steck-Vaughn's Scorebooster #2.

A Magazine for GED Students

We suppose, in this era of increasingly specialized magazines, that it was inevitable that someone would start a magazine for adult learners. The first issue contains a wide variety of brief articles on perseverance, making money, setting goals, and the like. The writers clearly have a goal of motivating and inspiring the readers to aim for and achieve "success." Sample copies are available while the supply lasts. Single subscriptions to the magazine are $10 per year, multiple copies are available at a reduced price. Inquiries about the magazine should go to The Adult Learning Association, P.O. Box 145, Withrow, WA 98858.

The magazine is the latest project of Chuck Herring, many readers will recall Chuck's work through the GED Institute in Washington state for many years. By the way, there is no connection between Chuck's GED Institute and the GED Testing Service—although the similarity in names and locations has led to some confusion. Chuck also has a variety of motivational (and recruitment) posters and buttons for use by GED learning centers. Posters, buttons, and publications are available from the GED Institute, G Street NW, HCR 81, Waterville, WA 98858. Or call (509) 745-8287 (Pacific Time).

New Guide to Employee Tuition Benefits

The Conference University Press has just published a new edition of *Corporate Tuition Aid: A Directory of College Financial Aid for Employees at America's Largest Corporations*.

The book is a 214 page company-by-company listing of 735 of the nation's largest banks, industrial firms, utilities, retailers, and transportation companies. Also included is a summary of national trends on corporate tuition reimbursement. Send $16.95 (postage paid) to:

Conference University Press
P.O. Box 24
Princeton, NJ 08542

1986 GED Statistical Report

The final word on last year's numbers is as follows:

During 1986 **739,683** people—up slightly from 1985—took the GED Tests. As a result of testing conducted at over 3,400 testing locations, 489,629 examinees earned scores that qualified them for an equivalency credential.

Approximately 73% of the examinees who completed the test battery in 1986 earned scores sufficient to qualify for the equivalency credential awarded by their state, territory, or province. Departments and ministries of education in the United States and Canada awarded **431,294** credentials—approximately two percent more than in 1985—based on GED Tests results.

The statistics in this report demonstrate that the GED testing program continues to offer a substantial number of people the opportunity to qualify for a high school equivalency credential. Since 1971, the program has enabled over six million adults to obtain formal recognition of their educational development through their attainment of a high school equivalency credential. Annually, one of every seven high school diplomas in the United States is issued based on results from the GED Tests.

Additional copies of this report can be obtained for $5.00 (prepaid) from the

American Council on Education
GED Testing Service
(Publications)
One Dupont Circle, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

A limited number of reports from prior years are also available for $3.50 (prepaid) from the same address.

For assistance in interpreting the information in the report, please contact Douglas R. Whitney at (202) 939-9490.

Quote of the week:

Comedian Mark Russell says that promoting literacy on television is like a baker of chocolate eclairs promoting a diet workshop. But the GEDTS sage says you'll be more successful finding lost car keys if you look in the dark street where you dropped them than if you look under the corner streetlight where the light is better.

GED ITEMS — Get your own for 1988

Readers have told us that they are not routinely able to read the newsletter because the single free copy sent to each center is not getting circulated. Since we began offering multiple subscriptions for instructional program sites, more than 100 sites now routinely receive 15, 25, 50 or 100 copies of each issue. The cost is modest—just enough to cover paper and postage, with the copies sent in bulk to the center director.

Yet, many loyal and devoted readers still insist that they'd do just about anything to get their copies sent in their own name to their very own office or home address. Because we have to handle each of these copies and correct addresses each time you move, we will charge $6.00 (U.S.) per year for an individual subscription to the bimonthly issues.

As before, GED Items may be ordered the following ways:

- **Single free copy** to each GED Examiner, State Director of Adult Education or GED Administrator, and Director of a local GED instructional center.
- **Bulk subscriptions** (Fees are $15 for 15 copies of each issue, $20 for 20 copies, $30 for 50 copies, and $50 for 100 copies.)
- **Individual subscriptions** (You must send a check or money order for $6 to receive these; we will not invoice you for this amount and we don't accept credit cards!)

To arrange for bulk or individual subscriptions, contact:

Circulation Manager, GED Items
GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1193

Large-Print Books By Mail

Good news for the visually handicapped: There is now a book club of large-print volumes, offering a broad selection of both fiction and nonfiction books by mail. Books are full-length, hard-cover editions and cost about the same as regular-print versions. For more information, write The Doubleday Large Print Home Library, Customer Service, 501 Franklin Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530. Or call (toll-free): 800-343-4300 and ask to speak to Operator 355.

Practice Testing as Publicity

Having trouble thinking up new ways to publicize your local ABE/GED instructional program or testing center? Here's a good one!

Run notices in the local newspaper, on the radio and TV stations, and put up posters in the grocery stores and libraries. Advertise that you will be administering the GED Practice Tests at a convenient location on one or more days (evenings) in the near future. You can even pick up on the national radio public service announcement "Prove how smart you really are!" theme if you want.

Start with the Reading Skills Practice Test, then administer Mathematics. These two tests may be enough to make a sound decision as to whether the person should be advised to take the GED Tests or to enroll in a GED or Pre-GED class. At any rate, an appealing ad campaign can be expected to turn out people who might come to take the tests, but who would not be willing initially to sign up for the classes.

This public session also gives other interested people a chance to see for themselves what the tests are like. This group may return home to encourage friends or relatives to take the classes or the tests, so you get a kind of multiplier effect, too. In fact, you should encourage this in your advertising, that way people who may be embarrassed to admit that they did not graduate from high school can say that they're there to check things out for a relative or friend.

News From the Department of Education

On June 15, 1987, Secretary of Education William J. Bennett announced the appointment of Karl O. Haigler as director of the Department of Education's Division of Adult Education. Haigler has served as acting director of the Division of Adult Education since September 1986 and has also served as director of the Adult Literacy Initiative since September 1985.

Later that week, on June 19th, the Secretary of Education announced that Bonnie Guiton has been sworn in as the Department's new assistant secretary for vocational and adult education.

Family Ties

In October 1986, the Ohio State Board of Education adopted a recommendation to the effect that publicly-funded adult education programs should work with all local agencies to make child care available for adults who return to school for basic skills, GED classes, or vocational training. This is an excellent, and needed, idea. Studies of barriers to ABE/GED participation regularly find that the absence of, and problems in arranging for, adequate child care are frequently cited as reasons for *not* participating in adult education. Plus, children see that an education is clearly something that their parents value highly. The same point was made at a recent national conference on vocational education.

In Kentucky, through the "Parent and Child Education" (PACE) program, non-diploma holding adults and their three- and four-year old children in six counties are bused to elementary schools three days a week for preschool, adult, and parenting classes. Does anyone else have a good, working model of an education/child care program that he/she would be willing to share with others? Send information to us, and we'll let others know.

Major Publicity Campaigns For GED

Dr. Harold E. Morse, Chairman of the Learning Channel, the largest and oldest educational cable network in the United States, announced a five-year campaign to get one million more GED graduates. At the same time that Dr. Morse announced this ambitious campaign, he underscored the need for technology to support the people it's intended to serve. The Learning Channel will be doing just that through its innovative cable programs on behalf of GED. Urge your teachers and students to look for the GED on TV's TLC programs in your area!

Similarly, Carolyn Harris, Vice President for Marketing announced that Dollar General stores are beginning a two-year campaign to increase the number of GED graduates. This will be done through an extensive radio and advertising campaign and information in their chain of stores. The commitment of such generous sponsors to the GED program is exciting for all of us, but especially for those future graduates who will benefit from these campaigns.

Tribute to Clark Jones Alaska GED Administrator

by Sue Henry

There comes a time in the immediacy of contingency planning, funding anxiety, and insurrections in the streets, that we need to stop for a minute, and take a look at what we have that makes our struggles worthwhile. This is one of those times. I want to talk for just a minute about the people we have worked with over the years to whom we owe great debts. They are many, and they are fine. I won't mention names of those who are still working directly in the field of Adult Basic Education and Literacy; their time will come. But I would like us just now to remember the efforts in this state of people like John Hulbert, Jeanette Gilliland, George Swift, Gretchen Bersch, Mary Alexander, Carol Hagel, and lots and lots more, most of whom have Adult Ed sawdust in their veins and go right on fighting the good fight because they believe in what we do.

But I want to say a couple of things now, about an Alaskan Adult Educator who will soon leave us, and to whom we owe one of the largest debts of all.

I can't count the number of times, over the years, someone has said to me, "When I first came into Adult Education, one person encouraged me, told me I could do it, made me feel I had something to offer and was a needed part of the group." Or, "he made sure I had the information I needed." Or, "just when I thought it wasn't going to work, Clark called and made me laugh." He made me laugh. No matter how tired or discouraged we were, he made us laugh. When we were irritated and frustrated, he made us laugh. He asked for a report dated last week, but then, he made us laugh.

There were tough decisions, he made them, sometimes at personal sacrifice. He never put himself first, if the program was concerned.

I worked with Clark for over four years in the Department, and not once in that time did he ever say I worked *for* him. He always introduced me as his "partner." He gave credit where credit was due, and sometimes where it was badly needed and might be overlooked. If we had a Hall of Fame, we would be adding his name. Since we don't, we'd like to "do the best we can" and show him our appreciation for a lot of years of hard work. Clark, we love you, and we will miss you.

GED and the American Dream

Obtaining a high school diploma is the most important element of "the American Dream." Early this year, the Roper Organization surveyed a national sample of adults—asking them to define the elements of the American Dream. Eighty-four percent listed getting a high school diploma as an important part of the Dream. More important, it turns out, than freedom to choose how to live (80%), owning a home (78%), or achieving financial security (64%).

We find that a particularly satisfying notion—and hope that you do, too. In addition, it suggests a publicity theme that sounds like a surefire winner: "Earn your part of the American Dream: Get your GED diploma!"

Wisconsin employers like the GED

Recently, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute surveyed Wisconsin employers about their experience with and policies concerning GED graduates. Here are some of the findings:

- Every large company (250 employees or more) was familiar with the GED credential; 80 percent of the smallest companies were, too.
- Seventy-eight percent of the employers said they considered the GED certificate as acceptable as a high school diploma; eight percent said they didn't know.
- Fifty-two percent of the employers said they consider GED graduates and high school diploma graduates equal when hiring.

The results seem to suggest that the GED program is well known and that its graduates are widely accepted in Wisconsin. For those employers who do not accept GED graduates as equal to high school diploma holders, however, it would be interesting to know whether they do so based on experience with GED graduates or on incomplete information (or bias).

The report also contains an extensive review of research literature concerning the persistence of GED graduates in the military. Copies of the report are available from the Employment and Training Institute, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

Getting Your GED Pays!

There have been many studies of the economic benefits of earning a high school diploma, but we finally have one that reports the economic advantages of earning a GED diploma. In a study "Employment of Young GED Recipients," David L. Passmore analyzed the results of interviews collected as part of the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Force Experience that began in 1979. Passmore, a faculty member at Pennsylvania State University, compared the 1985 labor force experiences of a representative sample of men and women 21 or younger when they were first interviewed in 1979. (That is, in 1985, they were ages 22–27.) He found that:

- Young GED recipients were more likely to have been participants in the labor force than persons who had not graduated from high school. (76.3% vs. 71.7%)
- GED recipients were more likely to be employed than youths without a diploma. (64.3% vs. 55.9%)
- GED recipients earned, on the average, $780 more per year than did non-graduates.

Even when differences that could be attributed to race, sex, marital status, and geographic location were taken into account, the study found statistically significant differences favoring the GED recipients. Passmore cautions that, while these differences may be related to the level of educational skills that the GED Tests require, they may also be attributable to what earning the GED diploma signifies to the recipient or employers or to a general propensity to "do" among those who earned the GED diploma.

Although a difference of 39 cents per hour (the adjusted difference in hourly wages for GED recipients over non-graduates) may not seem like much, it represents a considerable advantage when projected over a year or work-life. Since the median age for GED graduates is currently about 21, a $780 per year difference in annual wages amounts to an advantage of more than $34,000 over an expected worklife of 44 years. Does it pay to get your GED? It appears that it does—and significantly!

Passmore's research, which also compares the economic activity for these two groups with that of high school graduates, is summarized in GEDTS Research Brief No. 14. To obtain a copy, write Linda Russell at the GEDTS address.

The Last Word

A Real Job

by Richard Swartz

I get lots of ideas. Last year about this time I got two good ones. The first was to migrate westward and join forces with a winsome lady who brought some joy into a gloomy heart. The second was to start my own consulting business.

I was not the first educator ever to come upon that idea—the one about consulting, I mean. (Though, come to think of it, I'm sure I wasn't the first to get the other idea either.) Teachers and administrators who do consulting work—or want to—are as common as little boys who want to be cowboys. If you've ever permitted the idea more than a passing interest, you may profit from the history of my consulting career.

My plan was brilliantly simple. I would earn my keep doing consulting work and finish my novel and a dozen or so other writing projects in my considerable spare time. (Faithful readers of this column will recall a certain amount of land-clearing and cabin-building devoted to a similar purpose, but that was another era.) It was a plan hatched not out of impetuosity but out of opportunity. I was moving anyway—for the best of all reasons!—so why not set about achieving a long-established ambition. There was one other scheme I had brooded on for many a year, but I gave that one up one afternoon after taking a twelve and filling my shoes with sand on number eight. Professional golfers just don't get *twelves*.

Starting my consulting business was less like launching a new career than it was like adjusting to the life of a housewife. (I think we're called "homemakers" now.) I did not lack for gainful employment. I had built up a substantial base of clients over the years and, indeed, had assignments in hand before making the big leap. But I seemed to be the only person in America who knew this.

People who work at home, as everyone knows, don't really work, they're just pretending. It didn't take long for me to catch on to this. Each time I met new friends I found myself struggling to explain what I did for a living, which is the very first thing people want to get cleared up before they decide whether they want to *be* new friends with you.

"I do consulting work," I would say. This sounded a good deal less contrived to me than "I'm an educational consultant."

"Oh," people would say, grins beginning to grow, "so you don't have a real job."

Even my mom couldn't seem to get straight just what it was I did. She made the best of what she considered an ambiguous situation by telling my aunt that I did something "important." In truth, I was not completely unprepared for this. While I was working in Washington, she once asked me in a voice grave with suspicion if I worked for the CIA. All the evidence was there: I lived and worked in Washington, I travelled frequently, and I had written a spy novel (and a *bad* one at that). Despite the obvious opportunity, I told her that I was but a humble test editor.

While all these people were wondering how a grown man could get away with not working—and a few even asked me if I could keep up on their soaps for them—I had not a free moment. All the hours I had envisioned spending on my novel were devoted instead to less artistic pursuits—like earning money. In my few idle hours I fended off pointed questions concerning when I was going to go out and get a real job.

So I did, primarily so I could recover some of that precious spare time and get back to my writing. And, now that I have that real job that everyone seems satisfied with (though they know no more about this one than the one I did at home—I *could* be a spy for all they know!) it's time to bring this column to a close.

My good friends and colleagues at GEDTS have invited me to continue writing "The Last Word" for as long as I wish, but I'm moving on to new ventures now, and perhaps to new newsletters. Since the birth of *GED Items*, I've been granted the enormous privilege of communicating a real and sometimes fickle identity, while others have remained modestly in the background. I won't promise to be forever absent from these pages; I remain an educator involved in the education business, and I've never been able to resist trumpeting the ironic and outrageous in our business. I will promise to be forever with you as you continue your good work. To those of you I've met and grown to know and love, and to those who've flattered me by reading these pages, all the best.

[Rich Swartz was the first Editor of the GED Items and a good friend then and now in the halls of GEDTS. This month's "Last Word" column will be Rich's last. Ed.]

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American Council on Education
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GED Celebrities Share Their Success

Congressman James Florio, Democrat-New Jersey and Wally "Famous" Amos, Cookie King

On September 9, 1987, Congressman James Florio, Democrat from New Jersey, and cookie king Wally "Famous" Amos met on Capitol Hill to promote a mutual cause: adult education.

The two GED graduates met at a Washington news conference, where they launched an ad campaign to urge high school dropouts to try for their GED. Both men dropped out of high school themselves, but later earned their GED diplomas and went on to successful careers.

Wally Amos, 50, has given both time and money over the past years to fighting illiteracy. Said Amos, whose brother couldn't read: "There was a whole world not available to him." Amos earned his GED while in the Air Force. Now, years later, he heads a multimillion dollar cookie company.

For his part, Florio, also 50, received his GED while in the Navy. Later, Florio went on to graduate *magna cum laude* from Trenton State College. In retrospect, Florio feels he may be better off for his greater appreciation of a high school diploma.

ABC and PBS will be carrying the ad campaign on television as part of Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS). Public service announcements in print will appear in general interest magazines.

GED Math Instruction: Meeting the 1988 Challenge

by **Myrna Manly**

With this article, we begin a series that will provide specific suggestions for helping students prepare for the 1988 GED Tests. Because math is particularly challenging for GED examinees, it deserves first priority.

The preliminary results of an analysis comparing the performance of GED examinees to that of high school seniors (GED *Items*, vol 4, #4) show that the 1988 GED Mathematics Test will be a major challenge for examinees. A comparable study in 1982 revealed similar results for the current tests, so the findings were not surprising; rather, they reiterate that mathematics instruction for GED candidates needs to be improved. Some suggestions for GED mathematics instruction follow.

Allow the use of calculators during instruction. This allows more class time for the study of mathematical processes, instead of the mechanics of computation. A study (Hembree & Dessart, 1986) shows that calculator use enhances the learning of problem-solving skills, the primary

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GED Success Story

Award-Winning Md. Inmate Gains Degree of Hope in Education

By Linda Duffield

Hagerstown, Md. — When Frederick Gillis was selected one of Maryland's outstanding adult education students, he couldn't get out of prison to attend the award ceremony. But Gillis said he thinks the education he is receiving will help him stay out of prison after he's released.

"I just want to do something I like to do upon release from prison," Gillis said. "I know my opportunities are going to be better now with an education."

Gillis, 40, who received his GED diploma in prison and is studying at a college level, is the first inmate to be named by the Maryland Department of Education as an outstanding adult education student. He was one of 20 people selected in April for the award from 100,000 adult students in the state, according to the Education Department.

Gillis left school after the ninth grade. He got into trouble with the law for the first time at age 16, and is serving a 15-year sentence at the Maryland Correctional Institution for a drug violation. He will be eligible for parole in 1991.

After being sent to prison in 1984, Gillis, of Baltimore, entered its educational program because he was bored [and there earned his GED diploma].

"Getting to the college level was difficult," said Gillis, "but it was something I had to do. I always wanted to get my education, and I couldn't find the time to."

"I am sorry it was under these conditions that I had to do it, but it had to be done," he said.

Gillis said he planned to use the education "to better myself. Because of lack of education, I could never get the jobs that I wanted. I always had to work at lesser jobs."

Susan Kirby and John Pichot, two of Gillis' teachers at the prison, nominated him for the state award.

As a student, Gillis "had the right attitude," said Pichot. "He wasn't afraid to ask for help, he was always cooperative. He possessed certain qualities that most of our students don't possess. That is what made him different."

When he's not busy with his own studies, Gillis works with Kirby as a classroom aide, tutoring other inmate students.

About 600 of the Maryland Correctional Institution's 2,100 inmates participate in some type of educational program, and from 75 to 100 obtain their GED diplomas each year, officials said.

"What we are facing, basically, are the failures of the public school system, the people who have fallen through the cracks," said Pichot.

"We are just real proud to be in the forefront of correctional education," said Warden John Brown, who praised Gillis for his achievement. "I believe in education; I believe in correctional education."

Gillis, who has worked as a short-order cook while in prison, said his top goal upon release from prison is to own a restaurant. If that doesn't work out, he said, he would like a job perhaps as a social worker, in which he could help others.

—Associated Press, Baltimore
May 1987

GED Math

(continued from page 1)

focus of the GED Tests. The students' paper and pencil skills also improved with calculator use, even when these skills were tested without allowing calculators. Additionally, calculator use allows the student to proceed directly into real-life problems. Motivation is thereby increased, and the anxiety associated with math computation is reduced.

Introduce variables to represent simple relationships and continue to use abstract symbols at every opportunity. A symbolic representation of arithmetic topics provides the student with needed review at the same time that it introduces algebra. This approach helps students prepare for "set-up" items on the GED Mathematics Test. These items ask for the method of solution rather than the actual answer.

Concentrate instruction on realistic problems which can be solved using ratio and proportion strategies. The majority of everyday situations that demand the use of high school mathematics (and, therefore, the majority of GED items) can be solved using rate/ratio/proportion techniques. An example of how to incorporate these suggestions into your GED curriculum follows.

Begin instruction by challenging the students to figure the cost per unit of various items in the grocery store (e.g. cost per ounce or milliliter of juice). After dividing the total cost by the number of units in many specific examples, ask the students to generalize and symbolically represent what they did each time. This exercise introduces the use of variables. Next, expand the exercise into equations by showing how $r = c/n$ (price per unit equals total cost divided by number of units) is an algebraic transformation of the basic relationship, $c = nr$. This casual introduction to the use of variables and algebraic equations is not threatening to the student and provides the background needed to complete many of the algebra items on the test.

Give added meaning to fractions by introducing them as rates or division problems. For example, compare the value of various rates, including percents, by actually carrying out the division that they represent. Plot the results on the number line as they occur and note similarities as well as differences in value. Use the occurrence of equal ratios to illustrate the law of proportionality.

By graphing direct proportions on a coordinate plane, an aspect of geometry can be introduced. For example, the relationship between distance and time of a car traveling 55 mph is formalized by $d = 55t$. After 1 hour,the distance traveled is 55 mi. This point on the graph can be represented as (1, 55); after 3 hours it would be (3, 165) and so on. Plot these points, connect them, and use the resulting line to make predictions about other points in time.

Teaching that focuses on these fundamental relationships using real-life examples serves to build connections between units in arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. This emphasis impresses the students with the relevance of their study and also helps reduce the anxiety associated with the study of algebra and geometry.

Myrna Manly is the outgoing GED Math editor whose move to Los Angeles this month is both a personal and professional loss for GEDTS. Fortunately, though, in the next article of this series, Myrna has agreed to continue with more suggestions for GED math instruction.

News and Notes

In Phoenix, Arizona, *The Catalyst* reports that Ray Chavez, a GED teacher, has made two additional "requirements" in his class. First, he asks his students to return to class after they complete their GED Tests to share their experience with the rest of the class. This motivates the other students to complete the GED program and take their tests, too. He also asks the students to write a letter to the Director of the Adult Education Program. The letter highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of the program from their point of view. Chavez has kept track of his students' progress for the last two years and has an 80% success rate for completion of the GED Tests.

In Granite Falls, Minnesota, Henry Hill Apartments was the site for a graduation party this year. One of the residents in the senior citizen apartment building had cause for celebration.

Mildred Anderson, age 84, returned to school after a mere 71 years absence and earned her GED diploma.

Anderson is the oldest graduate of the Adult Basic and Continuing Education program in Granite Falls. Judy Slettedahl, program director, said Anderson is certainly among the oldest to gain a GED diploma in the state, although the record probably belongs to an 87-year-old man in the Mankato area.

Anderson also ranks as one of the best students Pam Liester has ever had the privilege to teach. The GED instructor describes her student as "very, very dedicated" and "so much fun to work with."

From Mariba, KY, Joe Henderson, GED Instructor writes: "I would like you to know about one of my students, Richard Joseph Michael Franks, from Greenville, South Carolina. Richard is 18 years old and tested for his GED diploma on May 1, 1987 at the Frenchburg Job Corps Center. His average test score was 60.2, with a total of 301.

Richard is the first student at Frenchburg Job Corps to ever achieve this honor. We are proud of his accomplishments."

Nabisco Programs Boost Employees' Basic Skills

In the world of business, it's a given that the high-tech computer age is here to stay.

One area of Nabisco Brands that is seeing a great deal of change wrought by technology is manufacturing. In order to better prepare employees for the complex, computerized machinery entering the workplace, the Company has begun offering basic skill improvement and literacy classes to employees in several locations.

"Our goal is to be able to say that we have some kind of program in every plant across the country by the end of the year," said John Butler, vice president, organization development.

One of the newest programs in the Company was begun this year at the Biscuit Division plant in Richmond, Virginia.

The Richmond program offers employees basic skills improvement in reading comprehension, writing, and math. Moreover, many students are working toward a GED diploma.

Although the Richmond program has only run one 10-week session so far, 62 people are participating and one student—Vicky Boatwright—has already earned her high school diploma.

"In order to better prepare employees for the complex, computerized machinery entering the workplace, Nabisco has begun offering basic skill improvement and literacy classes."

What motivated Boatwright to stick with classes? "Self esteem, self confidence," she explains. "I felt like I never accomplished anything in my whole life, but now I have. It was also important because I have an 11-year-old child. How could I motivate him to finish high school when I didn't?"

Other than Boatwright, six employees have taken the GED Tests and are awaiting results.

Four New Research Briefs

The GED Testing Service published four Research Briefs in September. GED Research Briefs contain summaries of research studies relating to the development, use, and interpretation of results from the GED Tests. The four latest briefs are:

(RB #12) *GED and Traditional High School Diploma Holders Attending Florida's Community Colleges: A Comparison of Academic Success;*

(RB #13) *Comparing GED and Traditional High School Graduates in Florida's Workforce*, by Philip J. Grise and James D. Klein, The Florida State University;

(RB #14) *Employment of Young GED Recipients*, by David L. Passmore, The Pennsylvania State University; and

(RB #15) *Alberta GED Candidates: Program Perceptions, Benefits, and Test Performance*, by Barry C. Carbol, British Columbia Ministry of Education.

Single copies of Research Briefs are available free from the GED Testing Service. Those interested in submitting manuscripts should contact Janet Baldwin at GEDTS.

Cost-Recovery Contracting in Maryland

Maryland's adult education programs are at the forefront in providing on-site tailor-made programs to business, industry, and public agencies.

Reductions in funding levels and increased educational costs have created an essential need for creative funding and a base of support beyond government grants alone.

Employers are finding it more convenient and effective to contract for services with adult education programs that can deliver programs on a not-for-profit basis.

This fall, a historic first was reached in a state agency contracting with MSDE to provide classes to their employees. Ten on-site classes have been established to provide basic education and GED preparation to State Highway Administration employees. SHA affords career ladder opportunities to its employees but found that a need for education is often a barrier to promotion. Consequently, local adult education programs are meeting this need with on-site classes. SHA employees receive the benefit of full release time to attend.

A Community College Commitment in Dollars and Sense

North Shore Community College, located in Beverly and Lynn, Massachusetts, has been a General Educational Development Testing Center since 1974. More than 1000 of the 5000 individuals who have successfully passed the GED Tests at NACC have enrolled in the college.

Surely some of the GED students decided to enroll at North Shore Community College because the Testing Center is located at the college. But others may not have decided to enroll if they had not been *invited* to participate in the Center for Alternative Studies GED Tuition Voucher Program.

According to testing supervisor, Yvonne Duerr, the Tuition Voucher Program is simple to administer. When students successfully complete the GED Test battery, they are personally invited to begin attendance at NSCC by accepting a tuition voucher currently valued at $45.00. The testing supervisor explains that the voucher can be applied to the cost of a three credit course in the Division of Continuing Education and Community Service and must be utilized in the subsequent semester.

Some students indicate that they are interested in the voucher as they plan to attend NSCC as a full-time day student. Others indicate that they do not plan to attend college immediately. But even those who have stated that they have no plans for attending college seem pleased that the offer is made and that they can ask questions in a non-threatening setting. This is the first important factor in encouraging higher education.

When students indicate they are interested in attending college, the testing supervisor discusses both the courses and credits at NSCC, as well as the individual's goals and objectives. The student interested in attending Continuing Education classes signs a four-part tuition voucher form with the understanding that this signature does not imply any obligation to attend college. The student is then advised that the Chief Examiner will sign the form and the student will receive it along with the official GED Score Report. If students do decide to use the tuition vouchers, they present them at the building station during registration.

The second important factor in encouraging education involvement is the personal referral to a college's counselor. Jill Ritchie, who is the Counseling Center's GED liaison with the Center for Alternative Studies, feels that what makes this program work is that one counselor on each campus has the responsibility for knowing all about GED testing and sharing that information with other counselors. Ritchie states: "GED recipients who begin college need help with creating a personal growth plan that supports their identity as a student. As counselors, we are integrating the high school and college counselor role."

For further information, contact
Anita P. Turner, Director of the
Center for Alternative Studies
North Shore Community College
3 Essex Street
Beverly, MA 01915
Tel: 617-922-6722

Job Corps' New GED Competencies Program

For the last year, a small group of Job Corps GED teachers and National Office staff members have been working on a new program of study materials appropriate for the corpsmember population. Historically, Job Corps has written its own study material, but this program is a departure from the old materials. The Task Force of Job Corp personnel decided to use commercially published materials as the base of their new program. The result of the work has recently been printed and was distributed to all Job Corps centers across the United States in early September.

One of the first decisions in the creation of the new program was setting competencies for each section of the new GED Tests. This was done by studying the content and cognitive levels used in the 1988 tests as described in the *Preview* and other materials provided to the public from the GED Testing Service. As competencies were set, the Task Force writers began a process of studying materials available from publishers. With the changes in the 1988 GED Tests, most publishers were creating new materials that seemed best suited to the Job Corps population. Since a high percentage of corpsmembers drop out of high school in 9th and 10th grades and have difficulty reading, both GED and PreGED materials were included in the new Job Corps program.

The next step, after training Job Corps GED teachers on how to use the new program, will be to evaluate the effectiveness of the Competencies Program and to make needed revisions and additions of newly published materials. Judith Vitale of Schenck Job Corps will be working on the changes through next spring when the Job Corps GED Competencies Program will be finalized.

For information about the 535-page Competency Levels, contact Linda Smith or Bob Emmett at the U.S. Department of Labor Job Corps office. Call (202) 535-0562. (Ask for ETA Handbook No. 324.)

One Town's Response to Marketing

Do you think that effective marketing and outreach efforts can only be done in large cities? Not so! At the Commission on Adult Education meeting in April, Georgia Overstreet and Lonnie Sherlock of Alliance, Nebraska shared some of their secrets for maintaining a stable adult enrollment in the ABE/GED program.

For one, the local U.S. Jobs Service office automatically refers any applicant who has not graduated from high school. For another, volunteers insert program and class announcements into the monthly bank statements periodically. Notices about ABE and GED classes are also routinely included in the public schools' newsletter to parents.

Finally, ABE and GED classes are advertised in places as diverse as the bank's electronic message board and cocktail napkins in the local taverns. In this way, Georgia and Lonnie say, they are able to enroll about 200 students each year—in a community with a population of about 8,000.

Marketing: Applying Some General Strategies to GED

by **Victoria Falco,** Director of Outreach and Marketing Activities, Center for Adult Learners, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

There are seven basic rules that will provide guidance during the planning and execution of your marketing strategies. Use any or all that seem useful to your program!

1. **It will take 18 months.** Gathering data, evaluating the previous year's activity and committing a plan to paper will take a great deal of time before the actual marketing activities begin. Once the planning stages are completed, and your marketing activity is under way, keep in mind that results don't occur instantly. For example, if you produce a poster encouraging people to get their GED diploma, it might be some time before a person who has been reached by the poster actually takes the GED Tests. The important thing to remember is that *it always takes longer than you think it will*.

2. **Know what you are trying to do.** If your goals have not been clearly defined, and the current situation has not been analyzed, the project cannot succeed. An understanding of what you are trying to accomplish, and why, will keep the project on track from beginning to end. This rule applies not only to your overall marketing plan, but also to each action within the plan. For example, it is necessary to assess the effectiveness of each brochure currently in use before designing new ones, and each new brochure should have a specific goal of its own. Careful planning on your part can also help to keep costs to a minimum. Know what you want, before you begin. Last minute changes lead to cost overruns.

3. **Establish firm "due dates."** This should include everything in the marketing plan from the date that your new brochure must reach the printer to the date that labels must be produced for mailing that brochure, to the date that you plan to drive around town dropping bundles of the brochures at libraries, churches, schools, etc. This schedule should be distributed to all members of the staff, including secretaries and even student assistants. The schedule not only helps adherence to the due dates, but also helps the staff understand their roles.

4. **Get the most from what already exists before attempting new possibilities.** Several excellent publications on your adult education programs may already exist. Therefore, it may not be necessary to produce new publications, but to find a better way to distribute existing ones. For example, instead of mailing four different brochures together in one envelope, the impact may be greater if each brochure is mailed separately within a few weeks of the others. Make decisions based on your research and your instincts. The last poster that you produced may not have been ineffective itself, but rather its placement or the time of year that it was distributed. In such a case, check all of the possibilities before deciding to create a completely new poster.

5. **Don't scrimp.** Trying to achieve more than one goal with a single marketing effort usually results in failure. In an attempt to conserve financial resources, for example, one adult education program produced a brochure that promoted both the GED preparation program and a clerical skills program. The final product was a brochure that failed to attract students to either program. Since it was serving two purposes, the messages were unclear and impersonal. The brochure addressed neither the needs of the adult wishing to take the GED Tests nor the adults simply looking to add new skills. As a result, the classes in both programs opened with very small enrollments, and more money was lost than saved.

6. **Make it easy.** Always tell students what to do, and how to do it. For example, instead of asking them to write the address listed on a poster, provide them with a postage-paid reply card. If the announcement of a GED preparation class is placed in the local newspaper, include the exact time and location of the class, along with instructions for how, where, and when to register. Tear-out coupons and phone numbers are also a good idea. It is interesting to note that research has shown that toll-free "800" numbers are successful not because they are toll-free, but because they are easy!

7. **Follow-up, Follow-up, Follow-up!** The worst mistake that a program can make is failing to follow up on student interest. In one extreme case, a college was threatened with closing for failure to attract new admissions. When an expert was called in to evaluate the admissions office procedures, it was discovered that several thousand inquiries had been received in the previous year, but gone unanswered. The college had invested a great deal in a direct mail campaign, yet nothing was done with the student reply cards that reached the admissions office. Obviously, none of these students enrolled at the college. While this case is unusual, it should illustrate the need to see each project to the end. Be prepared to answer requests for information that you receive from your marketing effort!

Dialogue Journals: A Literacy Tool

Dialogue journal writing is a written "conversation" between teacher and student, carried on regularly over time in a bound notebook, usually concerning topics introduced by the student. The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) calls the strategy "a very promising approach for developing literacy with...adults."

Even beginning readers and writers can use a dialogue journal, though their first efforts may be only a picture or brief phrase. Teachers respond, at a level appropriate for each student, extending the student's interest and/or introducing new topics. The emphasis is on communication, rather than language form, but the teacher's responses model good usage in a form that the students are eager to read.

Readers interested in learning more about dialogue journals and related research should write Joy Kreeft Peyton at the Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037 or call (202) 429-9292.

Schedule for Introduction of the Revised GED Tests during 1988

Date	Tests introduced in states, provinces, territories
January 1	Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Maine, Maryland, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Wisconsin, American Samoa, Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands
February 1	Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
March 1	Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Virginia
April 1	Georgia, Michigan, New Jersey*
May 1	Colorado, Indiana, Missouri, Texas
June 1	Louisiana, North Carolina, Puerto Rico
July 1	California, Illinois, Guam
August 1	Kentucky, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Wyoming, Virgin Islands
September 1	Nevada, New York Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Canadian provinces and territories
October 1	Oregon, Veterans Administration centers, U.S. Military centers (overseas and in most states), Federal prisons, and overseas
November 1	Alaska, Arizona, Massachusetts, Panama
November 15	Washington
December 1	Kansas, Ohio, West Virginia

**New Jersey will begin on April 1, 1988 (instead of January 1st) due to State rule-making procedures.*

NIF Literacy Program Expanding

Across the country, Adult Basic Education teachers are working to broaden their programs to include materials and methods that will build a bridge between the traditional literacy curriculum and students' larger needs for self-development. Many literacy programs are now using the materials and discussion format of the National Issues Forums' Literacy Program.

The National Issues Forums (NIF) are a nationwide, nonpartisan program sponsored by the Domestic Policy Association (DPA), a voluntary network of educational and community organizations. The Forums are designed to encourage citizens to participate in discussions about important public policy issues and to improve communication between citizens and policy makers. Each year, three issues are chosen for discussion and the DPA publishes books which present three or four alternate views and extensive factual information on each issue.

The NIF Literacy Program began as a pilot project sponsored jointly by NIF, Laubach Literacy Action, the Kettering Foundation, and B. Dalton Booksellers. Its goals now are twofold: to increase the motivation of adults learning to read or write English, and to help them develop the capacity to reason effectively about what they read.

NIF publishes a special audience edition of each of three issue books written at the fifth to sixth grade reading level. The issues for the 1987-1988 series of forums are "The Superpowers: Nuclear Weapon and National Security"; "Freedom of Expression: Where to Draw the Line"; and "The Trade Gap: Regaining the Competitive Edge".

This year, the DPA received a $425,000 three-year grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in support of the project.

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The goal for the end of the three-year grant period is to reach more than 200,000 students through programs in 30 states, according to Dr. Virginia Paget, a program officer for the Kettering Foundation and Director of the project.

Under the grant, regional programs for training literacy teachers in NIF concepts and methods are being developed. A substantial portion of the grant monies will be used in research and evaluation of the program in relation to its effectiveness for motivating adult students and developing their civic literacy, as well as for its ability to develop new strategies and approaches to literacy programming.

"NIF Literacy Program participants have included rural and urban poor, the handicapped, prisoners, recent immigrants, native Americans, and senior citizens."

NIF Literacy Program participants have included rural and urban poor, the handicapped, prisoners, recent immigrants, native Americans, and senior citizens. ABE educators who have used the NIF materials say that students in these programs are achieving more than literacy skills. Many have become interested in national and public issues and some have realized for the first time the importance of their individual voices in the democratic process.

Shirley Georgi, volunteer coordinator for the Westonka Adult Education Project in Mound, Minnesota, says that adult students need a voice in community affairs and that, despite low literacy skills, many can deal with the critical thinking required in group discussions.

In programs such as the NIF, students can practice and develop critical-thinking, problem-solving, and communications skills. Experience and research indicate that group discussions enhance the students' sense of personal competency and self-esteem and thereby motivate them to set and realize particular goals. Perhaps most important of all, this kind of program, directly related to adult interests and adult interaction, empowers students to take responsibility for their own learning.

For more information, contact Dr. Virginia Paget, National Issues Forums' Literacy Program, 100 Commons Roads, Dayton, OH 45459 or call 1-800- 433-7834 (in Ohio, 1-800-433-4819).

What's a Practical Idea for Teaching Organization in Writing?

By **Anne L. Gautreau**
Of Edsel Ford High School and
Joy Burwell Averett
Of J.F. Webb Senior High School
Oxford, North Carolina

Teach students to view their hands as natural outlines. After they have examined model essays, taken notes, and discussed the basic three parts of an essay—introduction, body, and closing—have students trace the outline of their hands in their notebooks. Identify the thumb as the introductory paragraph. Like a hitchhiker's extended thumb, it must grab attention and show a clear sense of direction.

The three long fingers are the body or middle paragraphs which must be developed separately even though they are part of the whole hand. The spaces between the fingers are like the indentations of paragraphs. Label the little finger as the closing which can quite naturally touch back to the thumb or the introduction to remind readers of the starting idea.

Adding a ring, a decorative but identifying symbol, can be compared to creating a title. It can either be plain or fancy, a real gem or a diamond in the rough. *English Journal*, 1987.

Adult and Continuing Education Week Changed to Spring

To promote the efforts of adult and continuing educators and to proclaim the importance of lifelong learning, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education will again coordinate National Adult and Continuing Education Week, to be held March 20-26, 1988. The timing of the week has been changed from the fall to spring to provide greater availability of national elected officials.

New Jersey Study Has Good News for GED Grads

A recent sample of 300 New Jersey GED graduates, who were followed for 12 to 18 months after earning their GED diplomas, showed that these graduates employed full-time, both initially and at the time of the study, averaged an increase in take-home pay of $66.67 per week.

Ask the Experts...That's You!

Counseling Examinees before the GED Test

We are hoping for more responses from you—the experts—to last month's question about how to use advisory committees effectively.

But in the meantime, Karen Clos of St. Philips College in San Antonio, Texas, has asked about techniques for counseling GED candidates. She also has shared a strategy that has served a variety of purposes for their program. Would you believe a **test?!**

The problem they faced was that candidates did not seem to read the information they were given about procedures for signing up and taking the GED Tests. So an instructor at St. Philips's designed a short quiz covering this advance information. This quiz not only assures that candidates know where to come, what to bring, and when, but has served as a screening device because candidates are asked to read, comprehend, and apply what they have read. Examinees who cannot answer 75% of the questions are not allowed to register. (This apparently motivates potential examinees to read the information carefully!)

Karen says that her first impression was that the GED battery was enough testing, but this has worked so well and is so easy that she now thinks it is a good warm up and counseling device. Some sample questions from the San Antonio test:

- How many GED subject areas are there?
- What is the minimum passing score?
- What ID do you need to bring to the test?
- If you wish to retake the GED Tests, how long must you wait?
- How much will it cost to take the GED Tests?
- Is it better to guess or leave answers blank?

It seems to us that you could adapt these questions for your own program and even add questions of your own. Thanks, Karen, for sharing.

Please send additional questions or suggestions to Jean Lowe, **Ask the Experts**, at GEDTS.

Research on Resistance to ABE Wins Award

Why do less than 10% of the ABE target group attend the ABE programs offered? In a dissertation which was awarded the Adult Education Research Conference's Outstanding Student Award for 1987, Dr. Allan Quigley, who is also chair of the GED Policy Advisory Committee, began by investigating how and why some adults resisted traditional schooling. He then applied their reasons to traditional ABE classes to see if what ABE offers is really any different than what they resisted earlier in their lives. Is ABE actually but a second chance at the unacceptable in the eyes of some non-participants? "The lessons learned from resisters have major implications for ABE if the field is to begin to see itself more critically and begin to change," said Allan in a recent interview.

Resisters were found not to resist course content, such as reading or math. Typically, they excelled at learning. Their resistance, however, was against overt and implicit cultural and value content which they saw in the schooling system. Normative values and the cultural conduct of the schooling system itself was resisted. It was found that such resistance took place at almost any risk in favor of alternate value-systems which the resisters saw as having greater integrity. Offering such non-participants a similar normative schooling system does not succeed for resisters, Quigley found.

He recommends that to involve resisters, learning must be designed with prospective learners based on value and culture settings which they deem relevant and acceptable. He calls for "learner-grounded" basic education if we are to teach more of our target group.

More information can be gained directly from Allan, now in the Adult Education faculty of Penn State University. (Contact: 2621 Mosside Boulevard, Monroeville, PA 15146)

GED *Items* Reader Survey

This last issue of 1987 ends our newsletter's fourth year of publication—a fitting time to re-evaluate the GED *Items* and to ask for your suggestions and preferences for the coming year.

We're aware that it will take real generosity to fill out the following survey form, to find an envelope, stamp, etc.! So thank you, in advance, to all of you who will take the time and trouble. Please return your survey form by **December 15th** to

Susan Robinson, Editor/GED *Items*
One Dupont Circle
Washington, D.C. 20036.

Results will appear in the January or March issue and guide us in the coming months.

1. What *Items* feature do you *always* read?
(Please circle all that apply.)
(a) cover story
(b) GED success story
(c) GED policy changes
(d) teaching tips
(e) "News and Notes"
(f) "Ask the Experts"
(g) other _____

2. What *Items* feature do you *never* read?
(a) cover story
(b) GED success story
(c) GED policy changes
(d) teaching tips
(e) "News and Notes"
(f) "Ask the Experts"
(g) other _____

3. What *Items* feature(s) do you like best?
(a) cover story
(b) GED success story
(c) GED policy changes
(d) teaching tips
(e) "News and Notes"
(f) "Ask the Experts"
(g) other _____

4. Have any articles persuaded or enabled you to improve your role in adult education?
Yes _____
No _____
If yes, which ones? _____
_____
_____

5. Which of the following subjects would be most helpful or interesting to you in the future? (Please circle all that apply.)
(a) GED testing policies
(b) teaching tips
(c) test-taking tips
(d) information on Special Editions
(e) teaching the learning disabled
(f) GED and the elderly
(g) Spanish GED
(h) French GED
(i) GED success stories
(j) successful GED programs
(k) theories of adult education
(l) other _____
_____

6. What is your primary role in adult education?
(a) ABE or GED teacher
(b) GED examiner
(c) ABE or GED local director
(d) GED administrator
(e) State Director of Adult Education
(f) Literacy Coordinator
(g) Other _____

7. How do you receive the GED *Items*?
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Please feel free to add additional comments on a separate piece of paper.

To subscribe to the GED *Items*, write Judy Allen, Circulation and Production Manager, at GEDTS.

To submit material for consideration in future issues, write Susan Robinson, Editor.

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